Linaker, R.

A COMFORTABLE TREATISE,

For the relief of such as are afflicted in Conscience:

Reuised the fourth time, corrected, interlaced, and enlarged in many places.

With an Addition of sundrie *Testimonies of holy Scripture*; whereunto the Afflicted may *resort, as to a shaddow* in the scalding heat of Temptation.

By R. LINAKER.

LVKE 6. 21.

Blessed are you that weepe now: for you shall laugh.

LONDON
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The Author to the Christian Reader.

Wise, already, this small Mite of Cõforts hath been printed for the benefit of troubled consciences: and albeit most slenderly performed, in comparison of diuers rich & complete Treatises, which haue beene

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publiſhed concerning that Argument, eſpecially by two very worthy Lights of this age, godly learned men of our owne Countrey, Maſter *Greenham* and Maſter *Perkins*: yet, being informed by good intelligence, that my little Gleane of Conſolations is in ſome requeſt with diuers poore ſoules, who haue alreadie receiued ſome meaſure of pacification thereby: And becauſe I haue beene ſundrie times importun'd by the Stationer to reuiew the

the ſame, I haue once againe examined what I haue formerly written; and here and there corrected, interlaced and added ſuch things as I haue deemed to be further needfull in that behalfe. I confeſſe I haue had time and leaſure inough for theſe two yeeres and halfe (for ſo long I haue been deprived of my maintenance and Miniſterie, after thirty yeeres preaching) to haue compiled ſome large and profitable Volume, if grace and ability had concur-

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red. But, what can a poore aged and crazed man (without houſe or home) performe worthy the reading, or looking on? The truth is, as I neuer iudged my ſelfe to bee furniſhed with any competent ſufficiency for the great worke of the holy Miniſterie: ſo now by reaſon of yeeres, many troubles and infirmities which haue deepely ſeized both vpon my body and minde, I am altogether vnfit for employment that way, except it vvere very plainely

plainely to catechize the grounds of Chriſtian Religion, to ſuch as are ignorant thereof. So that I could wiſh ſome Almes-houſe, or other place might entertayne mee in my declining age, to yeeld mee ſome ſmall maintenance, that I may not be an eyeſore, offence, or burden to any.

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To the Mourners in ZION,

A well-willer to their peace, and Fellow-feeler of their burdens.

ALthough this iron-flinty age ſtandeth more in need of an Hammer to breake, then of Oyle to ſupple broken hearts (ſo cold and careleſſe we are in the beſt things:) yet becauſe there is alwayes

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in Gods Houſhold as well ſome wounded Trauailer to bee bound vp and cured, as ſome carnall SAVL *to bee humbled: therefore the Lord who is rich in mercy and full of wiſedome, hath powred forth his Spirit on his ſeruants, to teach vs to repent and aſſure vs of mercy.* IOHN *the Baptiſt calleth for repentance and amendment of life: and Chriſt our Sauiour promiſeth remiſſion of ſinnes, and acceptance of our leaſt indeuours, as a moſt pleaſing ſacrifice. The Lord hath*

ſent

ſent forth ſome BOANERGES, *The ſonnes of Thunder, to ſhake the proud and exalted heart of man, and to make it to tremble; and to otherſome, his beloued* BARNABAS, *the* Sonne of *moſt effectuall* conſolation, *to pacifie the trembling and humbled ſpirit, whom hee onely reſpecteth.* ESAIES *trumpet telleth* Iſrael *of his ſinne: and the ſweet voice of the ſeruants of* GOD, *the ſtill noyſe of the true* AARONS *bels, aſſureth him of pardon. This Treatiſe therefore cannot*

not come vnſeaſonable or vn-welcome into the Lords Family, where ſome pant for breath and ſwoune away, through the inward pricking of godly ſorrow, and agonies of temptation; while others reſt in more peace: as LYDIA, whoſe heart being opened, ſhee attended to the Word. Bleſſed bee the Lord our God, who hath giuen vs the appetite of ſpiritual hunger, that is, of holy deſires; and hath made our ſoules to thirſt for grace, as the parched Land in drought deſireth the raine

raine of refreſhment. And bleſſed bee his Name for euer, which meaſureth out to the Land of his Inheritance, the dew of Righteouſneſſe, euen his poore Congregation. This handful of ſpiritual comforts is gathered out of Gods Garden for the Mourners in Zion, who are layd on the racke of Gods heauie diſpleaſure through their ſinne and his Iuſtice, plunged after a ſort in the gulfe of deſpayre, tortured with the fearefulneſſe of a trembling Conſcience, wounded in ſpirit (which is the dee-

deepeſt wound and moſt ſenſible) rent in ſunder with daily feares & conflicts, and impriſoned for a time in the vncomfortable chaines of fearefull expectation. And yet all this is for their good, euen to make the ſick ſeeke the Phyſician, the broken a Balme of Gilead, the fearefull a ſhelter, the flyer a refuge, and the breathles ſpirit a bleſſed reſt. To ſuch is opened the Fountaine of DAVID, *and to ſuch doe belong the waters that flow from vnder the threſhold of the Temple. Shiloach refreſheth*

ſheth Ieruſalem: and all the Riuers of Damaſcus, as Abanah, & Pharphar, are not like the waters of Iſrael. Come downe therefore and bathe thy ſoule in this Iordan, that thou mayeſt be cleane, and depart ioyfull, as NAAMAN *did after ſeuen times waſhing.* CHERITH *dryed vp while* ELIAH *dranke of it: but this faithfull ſeruant of the ſpirituall* ISAAK, *hath digged out, and opened a Well of liuing Water, which drought cãnot diminiſh, nor Philiſtims ſtop vp, or take*

take away from thee. I may therefore well call this Treatise the Anatomy of the contrite and broken heart, or Physicke for a sicke soule, where the sad shall find comfort, the sufferers patience, the afflicted deliuerance, the silly true wisedome, and the languishing spirit a staffe of Israel to leane vpon. And maruell not, that heauinesse is in the night to them whose ioy the morning shall bring forth. If teares shall bee wiped away, then teares must be for a season: and if the laden with sinne be

called

called to rest, then conscience of sinne is the way to quietnesse. Reade this Booke therefore with Prayer for a blessing, and thankes for the benefit.

And after that by reading and applying it to thy selfe and state, thou hast found thy hearts desire; then let thy soule blesse him whose compassion, and Christian endeuour offereth to thy heart these Flagons and Apples of holy Consolations. And pray thou with me for Ierusalems peace, and for her Childrens prosperitie,

ritie, and pray to the Maſter of the Husbandrie, the Lord of the Haruest, the Planter of the Vines, to viſit the bleſſed plants and fragrant herbs of his Eden, with the dew of Grace and Sunne of righteouſneſſe; That the dead ſtocke may be rayſed, and the rootleſſe branches may liue, and become fruitfull.

Bleſſe the plants of thy right hand, O Dreſſer of the Vines: pull vp by the rootes whatſoeur is not thine: and graunt peace in Zion, and abundant proſperitie to all

all thine Israell which dwell in the Land of thy Canaan,
Amen.

Thine in the best bound, euen in the loue of Christ,

T. D.

In the Addition *of comfortable Texts of Scripture, theſe be the principall heads.*

I.

THe profit which accrueth to the godly, by the exerciſe of afflictions.

II. That afflictions to the godly are of abſolute neceſſitie.

III. God moſt graciouſly protecteth and deliuereth his Darlings out of all afflictions.

IIII. The Lord will readily receiue, and comfortably anſwere the Petitions

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tions tendred by the afflicted.

V. God will happily perpect the work of grace begunne in his Children, by afflictions.

VI. He will freely pardon all sin which is frankly confessed.

VII. The Lord hath sanctified the Ministerie of the Word, to cure all the Maladies of a troubled minde.

A ſhort view of *thoſe things which be* handled in the Treatiſe following, wherein *theſe two things bee* contayned.

Firſt, an Exhortation to comfort ſuch as are troubled in mind, from the manner of their affliction.

Secondly, there bee ſeuen ſeuerall Obiections of ſuch as are afflicted in conſcience, with their ſeuerall Anſwers.

The Summe of euerie OBIECTION.

The firſt Obiection is, concerning the aſſurance of Gods fauour, wher-

of

of the afflicted Conscience very much doubteth.

The second confesseth Christ Iesus to bee a perfect Saviour: but the troubled minde cannot thus beleeve that he is my Saviour.

The third complayneth of weaknesse of Faith.

The fourth, of dulnesse in Prayer.

The fift, that the soule distressed cannot leave sinne.

The sixt lamenteth hardnesse of heart, and little profiting by the Word of God preached.

The seventh (and last) cryes out against evill thoughts which arise in the minde.

A comfortable Treatiſe for the reliefe of ſuch as are *afflicted in conſcience.*

IT is not long ſince I promiſed you ſome ſmall remembrance of my heartie deſire to afford you ſome comfort, concerning the inward affliction of your minde, if the Lord ſhould any way enable me thereunto. I haue now there-

fore (according to the measure of grace receiued) performed that my promise, as you shall vnderstand by reading these leaues following. Whereby if you shall reape so much comfort, as from the depth of my heart I intreat the Lord you may, I shall account my selfe for euer most neerely bound by all manner of dutie, and thankefulnesse vnto his blessed Maiestie. Howsoeuer it fall out, you shall receiue & keepe this poore treatise by you, as an vndoubted Record of my good meaning toward you, and some others, of whose particular estate I haue some certaine know-

knowledge, & for whom I pray most heartily, as I doe for you.

I confesse, your affliction is neither common nor easie to be borne. And because it is not outward but inward; not of the bodie, but of the minde. For as *Salomon* saith, *A sorrowfull minde dryeth the bones.* Prouerbs 17.22. Againe, *A man will sustaine his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can beare it?* Prouer. 18. 14. His meaning is, that no outward griefe or discommoditie whatsoeuer, but may be endured and borne with great patience and constancie: but if the conscience be wounded, and striken with that

Inward afflictions are neyther common nor easie.

thorough feeling of Gods wrath for sinne, or any other great cause, there is neither man nor woman which is able to endure, and beare it out long, without great and gracious assistance from God.

For this cause *David* the Prophet, who with great courage and wisedome indured the violent oppositions of all his professed enemies, being very many, mighty and malicious, as appeareth in the second, third, fourth and fift Psalme: yet when this valiant Champion and chalenger was set vpon by God, when his wrath had clasped fast hold of his guilty sinneful conscience,

in

in the agonie of his spirit being tortured with hellish torment, he cries out most passionately; *Lord rebuke mee not in thine anger, neither chastice me, in thy wrath: haue mercy vpon me, for I am weake: and heale me, for my bones are vexed: my soule also is sore troubled; but Lord how long wilt thou delay.* Psa. 6. 1, 2, 3

The mind of man is the fountaine of consolation, which ministreth comfort vnto him in all other troubles: If that become comfortlesse, what shall comfort it? If it bee void of helpe, who shall helpe it? If the eye which is the light of the body be darkenesse, how great is that M. Greenham.

darkneſſe? if the ſalt which ſauoureth all things bee vnſauourie, for what is it good? If the mind which ſuſtaineth all troubles, be troubled, how intolerable is that trouble?

Iob a holy man of God commended vnto vs by the holy Ghoſt for a myrror of patience, when the *Sabeans* violently tooke away his Cattell, when the fire from Heauen burnt vp his Sheepe & Seruants, when the *Caldeans* drauc away his Camels, when a violent Tempeſt blew downe the houſe, and killed all his Children, as it were with one ſtroke; yet with great patience he bare all theſe heauy croſ-

ſes

ſes and loſſes, as is declared by his owne ſpeeches which hee vttered for a worthy *Memorandum* to all poſteritie, ſaying; *Naked came I out of my mothers wombe, and naked ſhall I returne, &c.* But when at the ſtrange conference of his vncomfortable friends his minde began to bee agaſt (which was not ſo in all his outward former trials,) when his conſcience began to bee troubled, when hee ſaw the Lord faſten in his ſharpe arrowes, and to ſet him vp as a Butt to ſhoote at, when hee thought the Lord made him poſſeſſe the ſinnes of his youth: this glorious patterne could

Iob 1.21.

could not beare his griefe, but was so heauie, that he may commend the Image of a wounded spirit to all that come after him to the end of the world.

What a grieuous thing it is to sustaine a wounded conscience, may appeare by comparing it with other euils which fall into the nature of man.

There is no sicknesse or disease but Phisicke prouides a remedie for it: there is no sore but Chirurgerie will afford it a salue: friendshippe helpeth pouertie: there is imprisonment, but there is hope of libertie: suite & fauour recouer a man from

from him inflicted: authority and time weare away reproch: but what Physicke cureth? what Chirurgerie saueth? what riches ransometh? what countenance beareth out? what authoritie asswageth? or what fauour releeueth a troubled conscience? Experience sheweth plainely that a troubled minde impaireth health, dryeth vp the bloud, wasteth the marrow, pineth away the flesh, consumeth the bones, it makes all pleasures painefull, and shorteneth this life: no wisedome can councell it, no councell can aduise it, no aduise can asswage it, no asswagement can cure

ity, no eloquence can perſwade it, no power can ouercome it, no ſcepter will affray it, no inchanter can charme it.

That this is ſo, you can ſpeake from your owne experience: yet for your comfort, remember that you are not alone; the due conſideration whereof may not a little cheere vp your heart. For you reade of ſome in the Scriptures, ſome you heare of, and ſome you know your ſelfe, who groane vnder the ſame burden, whoſe conſciences are ſet very hard vpon the racke and whoſe poore ſoules are in little eaſe, as well as yours.

This

This is one principall point, which I would haue you thinke vpon continually; but then eſpecially, when Satan would beare you downe, that you are alone in this kinde of affliction, and that no body is ſo troubled as you are. For this purpoſe you may remember that ſweet ſentence of the holy Apoſtle, wherein hee doeth you to vnderſtand, *that the ſame afflictions which you indure, are alſo accompliſhed and ſuffered of your other brethren which are abroade in the world*: as if hee ſhould ſay, Let not ſuch a thought as this is ouerſway you, that you ſhould thinke you haue no fellowes.

A principall comfort for the troubled mind which would be often and thorowly thought on.

1. Pet. 5. 9.

The best affected are your partners.

lowes. For there bee a number of Gods deere Children, who are as much and as often troubled with the same, the like, or as great grief of the minde as you. For as there is no man so wise, so strong, or so rich, but there be many as wise, as strong, and as wealthy: so there is none so greatly grieued in body or minde, but there be many who are as deepe in the same griefe as they be.

Another chiefe comfort against Satans temptation.

Againe, if your wily enemie shall by this kinde of temptation assay to wound your weake Conscience, that you belong not to God, because the correction is so sharpe,

and

and the Rod wherewith you are beaten so smarting, you may boldly step to him, wring his Weapon out of his hand, and therewith thrust him thorow: for the manner of your chastizement doth proue verie strongly to the comfort of your conscience, that you are highly in Gods fauour: and why? because you are not only partaker of that correction whereof all the Sonnes and Daughters of God are partakers (for *so many as are without correction are Bastards and not Children*) but of that kinde of chastizement, which only is proper to those, who aboue many others haue

haue beene in greateſt fauour with God.

Dauid was greatly loued of God, and grieuouſly afflicted

For Example, *Dauid* was a man (as you haue learned from the Scriptures) *according to Gods owne heart*, that is, ſuch a one as the Lord ſet great ſtore by: he notwithſtanding was thorowly ſcourged with this three ſtringed Whip, as you may reade at large, not in one, but in many Pſalmes; by name the ſixt Pſalme thorowout, a great part of the two and twentieth, the eighe and thirtieth, the whole Pſalme, the one and fiftieth, and many moe. Which, that you may more readily find, I haue gathered together, and

Pſal. 25. 7, 11. 18. 32. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. 40. 12. 41. 4. 77. 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9. 85, 4, 5, 6, 7. 88, 6, 7, 8, 16. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. 102. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. 111. 130. 1, 2, 3. 143. 1, 2, 6, 7, 8.

placed

placed them in the Margent, for you to turne to, and reade when you think good: where you ſhall vnderſtand that his eſtate was all one with yours.

Againe you may remember, that *Paul* the Apoſtle was a choſen veſſel, *Whom God hath ſeparated from his mothers Wombe*: and there withall you cannot bee ignorant, how ſharply hee was handled, when the Meſſenger of *Satan was ſent to bowe and buffet him very ſore*, and that for a long ſeaſon: ſo that although hee prayed often and earneſtly, yet could hee not bee deliuered. This onely hee receiued as an anſwere from the

Acts 9. 15. Gal. 1. 15.

Paul a choſen Veſſell ſharply handled.

2. Cor. 12. 7, 8, 9.

the Lord, *that his grace should bee sufficient to vnderprop and stay him in his greatest temptation: for my power* (saith hee) *is made perfect through weakneſſe.* In this resolution he rested himselfe as well contented and comforted, vntill such time as the Lord should grant him full release. This is cleered by his owne words, as they immediatly follow in the tenth verse, *Therefore I take pleaſure in infirmities, in reproaches, in neceſſities, in anguiſh for Christs sake: for when I am weake, then am I ſtrong.* These are choice Examples of choice persons, and not many such to bee found in the whole

Passe not by this example without some good Meditatiō.

whole bodie of the Scripture: that you may conſider how great a priuiledge of fauor God hath vouchſafed you, to make you equall with his deereſt children, and that in ſuch afflictions, as for their ſuffering of them, they are aboue many thouſands moſt renoumed. But why ſtand I vpon theſe Examples: when as Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe *(being the Sonne and Heire, in whom onely the Father is moſt highly pleaſed)* was not onely in meaſure and mercie thus chaſtized as you are, but as we ſay commonly, beaten without mercie: yea, he was turned and beaten, ſo as through the exceeding

Trouble of minde a great priuiledge of Gods fauour.

Mat.3.17. The Son of God moſt troubled.

Luk.12.44.

Your affliction is but a fleabyting to that which your Sauiour hath suffered for your sake, that you might haue ease.

ding great anguish of his soule, hee sweate such a sweate in the Garden, as neuer man sweat the like, that is, drops like drops of bloud, trickling downe to the ground. Yea, further: being brought and hanged vpon the Crosse (beside all the villany offered and done to him by the malicious cruell Iews) his owne Father handled him so extreamly, not like a Father, but as a most iust Iudge, that hee could not any longer bite in his griefe, but in great bitternesse, breakes out into these words sauouring of deepe despayre, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Mat. 27 46 these words, I say,

ſay, ſauour ſtrongly of deſpaire, becauſe hee cryes out that *God had forſaken him*: yet was he far from deſpaire, becauſe in the greateſt Conflict with Hel and Satan, his whole truſt was in God; and therefore with moſt aſſured confidence, not once, but againe, hee doubleth his ſpeech, ſaying, *My God, my God*, Thus you haue not onely many of the faithfull, but the Sonne of God (clad in your nature) more then a partner with you in your ſufferings: which I haue alledged to this end, that you may know that as *all things worke for the beſt to thoſe that loue God, euen to them*

Rom. 8 28.

that

The sharpest afflictions worke the sweetest comfort.

that are called of purpose: so this affliction of yours, which because it is so sharpe, shall therefore worke your good a great deale the rather. For experience teacheth, that that purgation which for the time doth worke most strongly, and putteth the patient to the greatest paine, doth in the end bring the most ease to him who hath receiued it.

But it may be you will take exception against this last Example of Christ Iesus, & say that he was not so tormented for his own, but for your sinne, *because he was without sin*. Therein you speake most truely; for the Apostle saith, *Heee*

One exception.

Heb. 4. 15. 1. *Ioh.* 2. 1, 2.

was

was deliuered to death for our ſins: as if hee ſhould ſay, Whatſoeuer griefe or torment he indured liuing or dying, he indured it for our ſakes, that the whole fruit and comfort thereof might redound to vs. And to this agreeth that which is written in the firſt Epiſtle of PETER, *Who his owne ſelfe bare our ſinnes in his body on the Tree, that wee being deliuered from ſinne, ſhould liue in Righteouſneſſe, by whoſe ſtripes we are healed.* From hence therefore may you reape no ſmall comfort, for the peace of your conſcience in the greateſt heat of temptations. For in as much as hee ſuffered not for

Rom.4.25.

1.Pet.2.24.

Chriſt hath ſuffered the torments of Hell, that wee might not ſuffer the. yea, that you may neuer ſuffer them.

for his owne, but for your ſinnes, you may be therefore well aſſured that you ſhall neuer taſte of thoſe Helliſh tormeats, which your ſinnes haue dẽſerued; & that becauſe your Suertie, your Mediatour, your Sauiour Ieſus Chriſt hath in your nature, but in his owne perſon (euen to the vttermoſt of Gods Iuſtice) ſuffered them for you, that you might neuer ſuffer them, but bee fully and for euer diſcharged, both in this World, and in the World to come. For, as the Apoſtle wit-
Rom. 8. 1. neſſeth; *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Ieſus.*

Here againe, I know wel

well you will thus reply; that you must grant, there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Iesus, for that must needes be true: No man can with any colour of reason gainsay it, because the vndoubted truth thereof is so plainly auouched from many most euident places of holy Scripture. But all the doubt lyes in this, whether you your selfe be in Christ Iesus or not. For of that cannot you be perswaded. If you could bee assured thereof, then you would not doubt, but you were without all danger of condemnation. But this is one point, which doth worke no small trouble in your

Another exception

To bee in Christ Iesus is true happines to him or her which is assured thereof.

your conscience. Goe to then, let this be one chiefe point to deale with you in.

And first to begin with-all; Consider what hath beene the testimonie of Gods Spirit vnto your spirit in former times: and then I doubt not, but eyther from the sense of the same Spirit, crying in your heart, *Abba Father*, or from the remembrance of the dayes of old; wherein you haue had a comfortable assurance of Gods fauour, you shall be able to repell the force of this temptation, and bee comfortably perswaded of your saluation in Christ: because the Holy Ghost the

the Spirit of Truth cannot lye, who confidently auoucheth, that whome God once loueth he loues continually to the end. But to follow this more largely, let mee aske you this one queſtion. And I do not onely pray, but on GODS behalfe for his Glorie, and the good of your ſoule, I charge you to anſwere mee plainely and truely. Had you euer any aſſurance of ſaluation in all your life? were you euer perſwaded by the preaching of the Word to beſaued by the death of Chriſt Ieſus? did you euer feele the power of true Repentance in your ſoule by theſe markes, that you

A great charge.

Once aſſured and euer aſſured of ſaluation.

An vnfayned sorrow for sinne, a deadly hatred, a sound purpose of amendment, are vndoubted marks of Gods Childe. 2. Cor. 7. 9, 10, 11.

were more grieued and sorrie at the heart for your sinnes, then for any thing in the whole world? did you and do you beare a deadly hatred against them, as against the Deuill himselfe? did you and do you purpose to the vttermost of your power, to forbeare and forsweare the practice of them all, more particularly and specially your most precious and deareſt sinnes which haue been most toothsome and best pleasing to your accursed nature, doe you in the vprightnesse and truth of your heart resolue by Gods good grace to walk in Holinesse and Righteousnesse all the dayes of your

your life? did that Word which you haue heard so long, so soundly, & powerfully preached to your conscience, which you reade so diligently, wherein you meditate and take so great delight, as that you count all wordly things but losse and dung in comparison thereof? did that Word, I say, neuer speake peaceably to your conscience by the holy Ministerie? did it neuer giue you assurance and ioy in the Holy Ghost? did it neuer worke such sweet comfort, as no wordly ioy could be like vnto it? did you neuer heare such a Sermon from your owne godly and carefull Pastor,

Luke 7.15. See you answer to euery Article truly as you will answer at your peril *Psal.* 1.2. *Phil.* 3.8.

or from any other, that you haue ſaid at your cóming home, you would not for all the Worlds good but you had heard it, becauſe it was ſo ſweet and comfortable? did you neuer ſpeake that word, from the true feeling of the heart, which might warrant your ſoule that you are in Chriſt Ieſus.

If this Word hath had this gracious and powerfull worke in your ſoule (as I am fully perſwaded it hath, and your ſelfe cannot denie it; for if you doe, beſide the great wrong you offer your owne ſoule, you treſpaſſe againſt that Spirit, whereby you haue beene ſealed vnto

Ephes. 4. 30

the

the Day of Redemption) then know assuredly you are so grafted into the bodie of Christ Iesus, as nothing shall be able to separate you from that loue which the Lord your God beareth you in his deare Sonne, in whom he hath so loued you once, as hee must needes loue you for euer. And that because the Euangelist saith, *whom hee loues hee loues to the end,* For *the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.* Againe, *God is not as man that hee should lye, neither as the Sonne of man that hee should repent. Hath he said, and shall hee not doe it? and hath hee spoken it, and shall hee not*

Gods loue is euerlasting and vnchangeable. *Iohn* 13.1. *Rom.* 11.29

Num. 12.19

accompliſh it? No, bee you well aſſured, & write vpon it, *that the ſtrength of Iſrael will not lye nor repent.* For as the Apoſtle *Iames* ſaith *with him there is no variablenes nor ſhaddowing by turning.*

1. *Sam.* 15. 29.

Iam. 1. 17.

Let theſe and ſuch like places bee alwaies in your remembrance, and giue your ſelfe vnto the continuall Meditation thereof. For they ſhall ſtand you in great ſtead, if you can call them to minde, when your temptations ſhall aſſaile you with greateſt ſtrength: for as the Wiſeman ſaith; *A word ſpoken or remembred in his place, is like Apples of Gold with Pictures of Siluer; Pro-*

uerbs

uerbs 25. 11. And forget not, often to think of such excellent places as that is, which you find written in the eight Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, after this manner; *What shall we then say to these things? If God bee on our side who can be against vs? who spared not his owne Sonne, but gaue him for vs all to death, how shall he not with him giue vs all things also? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Chosen? It is God that iustifieth: who shall condemne? It is Christ which is dead, yea or rather which is risen againe, who is also at the right hand of God and maketh request also for vs. What shall se-*

Therefore read them often and continually, that you may alwayes haue them at your fingers end.

Rom. 8. 31, 32. &c.

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parate vs from the loue of Christ? Shall tribulation or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakednesse, or perill, or sword, &c. No, I am perswaded, that neither death nor life, Angels nor Principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor hieght, nor depth; nor any creature shall bee able to separate vs from the loue of God which is in Iesus Christ our Lord. And full sweet to this purpose are those words of the holy Prophet Dauid; *The Lord is neere vnto them that are of a contrite heart, and will saue such as be afflicted in spirit. Great are the troubles of the righteous: but the Lord deliu-*

Psal. 34. 18, 19.

reth

reth him out of them all. Againe, *Weeping may abide at euening, but ioy commeth in the morning.* Pſal. 30 5.

But, you finde no ſuch matter, you ſay: for this trouble of minde hath holden you, not only Nights and Daies, but Weekes, Moneths, and Yeeres, & yet you can find no eaſe nor comfort. Bee it ſo, yet bee not therefore out of heart: for the longer it bee before you haue eaſe, the more welcome it ſhal be when it commeth. And to this purpoſe are the wordes of the Wiſeman where he ſaith, *The hope that is deferred, is the fainting of the heart: but when the deſire commeth,* Pro. 13. 12.

it is a Tree of Life.

A Marchant Venturer in his lawfull calling, crosses the Seas to Turkie, or some farre Countrey with his Wares and Marchandise, making reckoning within so many Moneths to returne, if the Windes fauour him, and the Markets answere his expectation: his louing Wife at home about the time appointed with gladsome heart looketh daily to giue him a cheerefull welcome: but, but by distresse of weather or some other accident, shee heares not of him: or if shee doth, the newes is most vncomfortable vnto her, that he and his goods are cast away;

way; or elſe hee is taken priſoner by ſome mercileſſe and cruell Enemie. Thus the good woman with ſorrow and griefe pines and waines, many a day being wholly diſtracted betweene hope and feare. At laſt, when ſhee thinkes leaſt, her deereſt Husband returneth ſafe with great wealth: he hath tarryed long and very long but at laſt hee comes: Is he not welcome becaſe he tarryed long? nay, is hee not ſo much the more more welcome? Be your ſelfe Iudge, and the Lord giue you the Spirit of wiſdome to make application for your beſt good.

Laſtly, let the words of

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Eliphas the Temanite bee faſt bound vnto your ſoule, which you ſhal find thus reported in the Book of *Iob*, the fift Chapter, 17, 18, 19. Verſes, *Behold, bleſſed is the man whom God correcteth: therefore refuſe not thou the correction of the Almightie. For he maketh the wound, and bindeth it vp: he ſmiteth, and his hands make whole. He ſhall deliuer thee in ſix troubles, and in the ſeuenth the euill ſhall not touch thee.* The ſumme and drift of all that which hath bin ſet dowr e (from the beginning to this preſent place) is to encourage you concerning the manner of your affliction: which though

though it bee ſharpe and bitter to the fleſh, becauſe *no chaſtiſement for the preſent ſeemeth to bee ioyous, but grieuous: yet there is a time when it ſhall bring the quiet fruit of righteouſneſſe vnto them that are exerciſed therby.* In regard hereof, *Moſes* the man of God ſaith, *That the Lord humbled his owne chooſen people and prooued them, that hee might doe them good at their latter end.*

Heb.12.11. A principall comfort for the afflicted ſoule.

Deut.8.16.

And truly, in my poore iudgement, you may gather farre more vndoubted aſſurance of Gods euerlaſting fauour towards your ſoul, by theſe inward afflictions, then by any outward proſperitie of a-

Afflictions better tokens of Gods loue then riches and proſperity

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ny worldly blessing whatsoeuer, whether it bee of health, of riches, or such like. And that, because in these your afflictiõs you are most like vnto your Head Christ Iesus; who though
Heb.1.2. Mat.8.20. *he were the right Sonne and Heire of the whole World; yet had hee not a house to hide his head in*, as himselfe confesseth. But it pleased the Father (*seeing*
Heb.2.10. *he would bring many Children vnto glorie*) *to consecrate the Prince of their salvation through afflictions.* Now, as the holy Apostle reasoneth: *This is a*
1.Tim.2. 10,11. *true saying, If wee be dead with him, wee shall also live with him. If we suffer with him, wee shall also raigne with*

with him. To be ſhort, the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *That we muſt by many afflictions enter into the Kingdome of God.* And once againe, *Thoſe whom hee knew before, hee alſo predeſtinated to be made like to the Image of his Sonne, that he might bee the firſt-borne among many Brethren.* So that you may wel perceiue you are not thus far forth any whit out of your way, but you keepe therode, euen the good way which leadeth you as ſtraight as a Line vnto the Kingdome of Heauen. And therefore as no Traueller, who keepes his right way, and knowes it, will bee ſorrie, but very glad, becauſe he truſt-

Act. 14. 22. *Rom.* 8. 28.

Afflictions the high way to Heauen.

truſteth to come to that place, where his deſire is to abide: ſo, no more cauſe haue you to bee grieued, but rather to reioyce, becauſe you know you walk in the ſtraight path, which ſhall bring you to that place of your abode, where you would ſo faine be, and where you ſhall abide moſt bleſſed and happie for euer. Thus much haue I thought good to offer vnto your godly Meditations, to encourage you concerning the manner of your afflictions. The Lord grant you a rich portion of his holy Spirit, that your troubled mind, which with ſorrow and anguiſh is ſo low caſt downe,

downe, may reape a gracious bleſſing.

Now, you ſhall further vnderſtand in few words, what ſhall bee the ſubſtance of all the matter which followeth in the remainder of this poore Treatiſe. I purpoſe ſo neere as I can, to gather together thoſe Obiections, which you and others do obiect againſt your ſelues: and ſo farre as the Lord ſhall afford mee his grace, I entend in order to anſwere them, that you may poſſeſſe ſome portion of comfortable contentment for the peace of your conſcience: which the God of all comfort & conſolation giue you & all his afflicted

The ſubſtance of the whole Treatiſe following.

ſlicted ſeruants (whomſoeuer) abundantly for his Sonne Ieſus Chriſts ſake. *Amen.*

The firſt Obiection and Anſwere. The troubled mind doubts of Gods fauour.

The firſt and principall obiection (ſo farre as I can conceiue and learne by conference with you, and ſo many as I haue any acquaintance with) is this: That you doubt much of Gods fauor towards you, that you feare it greatly you are not the Childe of God; and if you bee, yet can you not bee thereof certainly perſwaded. This obiection hath alreadie beene anſwered in part: notwithſtanding, becauſe it is as the foundation of all the other obiections, I will in hope of Gods gra-

cious

cious aſſiſtance endeuour my ſelfe to anſwere it more fully, for your better contentment. Firſt, therefore I would gladly learne this one thing of you, or of any other (who is your partner in theſe temptations) who it is that beareth you ſo greatly in hand, you are not the Childe of God. If you anſwere, your conſcience, through the greatneſſe of your ſinne doth tell you ſo: then doe I againe demand of you, who it is that ſets your conſcience aworke to vrge this point and to what end? If it be Gods Spirit, you may bee right glad, becauſe then it is for your good: namely.

A needfull point: therefore marke it well.

Hearken to Gods Spirit: for he ſeekes your good

ly, for your further effectuall Humiliation by vnfained hearty Repentance, not to be repented of; and that you may be enforced to goe out of your selfe, to seeke the forgiuenesse of your sins and euerlasting Saluation in Christ his Death and Obedience, to the full assurance of Gods fauour, and also the euerlasting Peace of your conscience.

Harken not to Satan, for he hath vowed your destruction.

But speake the truth: Is it not rather a strong temptation of Satan your deadly Enemie to trouble the peace of your conscience, and (if it bee possible) to driue you to desperation? If it bee so, as I feare it greatly, then say I vnto

you.

you, there is no cause why your should beleeue him. First, because he is a Liar. Secondly, because hee is your Enemie, who meanes you no good at all. That hee is a liar it is manifest, *because hee hath beene so from the beginning*. And he cannot now change his nature, no more then the Leopard can change his spots, or the Black-more his skinne. Iohn 8.44.

If he say you are out of Gods fauour, that he loues you not, that you are not the Child of God; beleeue him not, yea, answere him thus, that you doe the rather beleeue the contrarie, that you are in Gods fauour, that hee loues you,

and

and that you are his child whom hee hath chosen in Christ Iesus. For hee that was not ashamed to charg a lye vpon God himselfe, will not sticke to face you out with any vntruth. Therfore you are to reiect him as a notorious treacherous deceiuer, not worthy of any credit in any matter whatsoeuer. It is as much against his nature to speake the truth, as it is possible that GOD should lye, who is onely and euer true. Therefore, there is no cause why you should beleeue such a common liar as the Deuil (who will lye as fast as a Dogge can trot, as we vse to say in our common speech).

Gen.3.4.

Heb.6.18.
Rom.3.4.

ſpeech). But you haue iuſt cauſe to except againſt him; not only in this particular, but generally in whatſoeuer he ſhall ſay or obiect againſt you.

Againe, you neede not doubt that hee is your Enemie, and that to the death: becauſe hee *is the common accuſer of the brethren, and (like a roring Lion) goeth about continually ſeeking whom hee may deuoure.* In regard whereof you are not to harken to him, or beleeue any thing hee ſhall ſay vnto you, no although hee ſpeake the truth. And my reaſon is, becauſe hee will not tell you the truth, to helpe, but to hinder you; not

Reu 12.10. 1.*Pet.* 5.8.

No credit to bee giuen to the Deuill though he speake the truth, because his meaning is bad.

not to cheere, but to choke you; not to saue, but to spill your bloud. And whereas you will reply, you cannot deny but hee saith the truth concerning the greatnes of your sinnes, and that iust condemnation which you haue deserued for them; I answere thereto after this manner: That you are not to take the knowledge of your sins from Satan, because hee will not tell you the truth, and the whole truth as it is indeed. For either hee will pare your sinnes, and make them lesse then they bee, to make you altogether carelesse, os else hee will make

make them greater then they bee, to throw you head-long into despayre. But you are to take the perfect knowledge of your sinnes, from the true vnderstanding of the Law of God, fast girded to your conscience, by the holy Ministerie, which God hath ordayned for this purpose, that you may thereby come to true and vnfayned repentance of all your sinnes, and bee saued through Faith in his Bloud. For *the bloud of Christ doth cleanse you from all sinne.* And if you will yet reason against your selfe that your sinnes are so great, that you can gather no assurance of Gods

Marke the Deuils cunning. The holy vse of the Ministery. *Rom.* 7. 7. Regard & reuerence the Ministerie if you loue your soule.

1. *Iohn* 1. 7.

Examples of notorious Sinners who repented and were pardoned.

fauour toward you: then let me offer to your consideration some examples of such notorious knowne Sinners, as the World cryed shame of, and yet repenting had their sinnes forgiuen them. I meane, of set purpose to make choice of those persons and people, who in the Scriptures are noted to be most infamous: because you and such as are so exercised as you are, doe indeed charge your selues further then you ought. For you make your selues so bad, as though none were to be compared vnto you, or as though God had no mercie in store for you. And hereupon it comes

No easie matter to comfort a troubled minde.

comes to paſſe, that no
councell bee it neuer ſo
graue and gracious, no
reaſons bee they neuer ſo
many, pregnant & waigh-
tie, can preuaile, or per-
ſwade you; nay, ſcarce any
place of holy Scripture,
though moſt fitly and
faithfully alleaged and ap-
plyed to the purpoſe, can
bee faſtned vpon you,
which may bring any
ſmall portion of peace, vn-
to your troubled conſci-
ences. I intend therefore
to match you ſo, and with
ſuch, as you ſhall bee for-
ced to confeſſe you are
out-matched. The end
ſhall bee this, To bring
glad tydings to your hea-
uie and ſorrowfull ſoule,

that God both is and will bee more fauourable to you, then you can as yet be perſwaded. For if God haue ſhewed mercie to thoſe who by reaſon of their knowne ſinnes, were in all mens iudgement further from mercie: how can he denie you mercie, who neuer brake into that outrage of ſinne, and yet doe moſt humbly ſue vnto him for Mercie? That good Maſter, who forgaue his bad Seruant at his owne intreatie, ten thouſand talents, would not haue bin hard vnto him, who ought but a hundred pence, if he had ſued vnto him, as hee did to this cruell and vnmercifull fellow-ſeruant, who

Reaſons to perſwade the afflicted.

The Lord perſwade your heart

Mat. 18. 28

who by no meanes would be intreated, to shew that fauour in a little debt, which was shewed him in a very great summe. Remember I pray you, that you haue to deale with God, who is farre more mercifull: and therefore you may bee sure to finde more fauour.

Mary Magdalen a notorious & knowne Sinner.

You reade in the Gospell of Saint *Luke*, the seuenth Chapter from the thirtie and sixt Verse vnto the end of the Chapter, of *Marie Magdalen*, and of her behauiour, being a woman not onely vehemently suspected of lewd life, but openly knowne for a common Harlot, and generally so taken, as may

Luke 7. 38, 39. The hypocriticall Pharisie is offended with Christ.

appeare by the wordes of *Simon*, the Phariſe: who receiuing Ieſus Chriſt into his Houſe, thought neuer a deale the better, but much the worſe of him, becauſe he ſuffered ſo bad a woman to come ſo neer him, but eſpecially to lay any hand vpon him, as to waſh his feete with her teares, and to wipe them with the haires of her head: to kiſſe his feete, and to anoint them with Ointment. All this notwithſtanding mark what maruailous great Mercie Ieſus Chriſt ſhews to this ſo wretched and ſinfull a woman, now weeping & wayling, moaning and mourning, grieuing and gro-

groning vnder the intolerable burden of her moſt lothſome and abominable ſinnes.

1 Ieſus Chriſt likes Maries doings.

Firſt, hee takes in verie good part, whatſoeuer ſhe had done vnto him: whereas *Simon* looked hee ſhould not onely haue ſhewed his great diſliking of her dealing, but haue ſhaken her vp, and that roundly for her ſaweines, to come ſo neere him without his loue & leaue.

2 Chriſt cõmends *Maries* teares more then *Simons* great Dinner.

Secondly, he is ſo farre from miſliking her behauiour in that preſent action, that hee doth highly commend her to *Simon*: and that after ſo ſpeciall a manner, that hee giues him to vnderſtand, hee

takes better liking of her kindneſſe, then of all the great prouiſion which hee had made for him: becauſe whatſoeuer ſhee did, ſhee did it with an vpright heart towards him, and in a ſincere loue for the good of her owne ſoule:

3 *Maries* ſins forgiuen her.

Thirdly, for the eaſe of her heart which now was grieuouſly tormented for her wicked life paſt (as appeared by the abundance of teares ſhe powred out) he ſaith to *Simon* in her hearing, *that many ſinnes were forgiuen her.* *Luke 7. 47.*

4 Chriſt ſpeakes particularly to *Marie* for her comfort.

Fourthly, that ſhee might take better hold of his words, and apply them to her ſelfe for the comfort of her owne ſoule, he turnes

turnes his ſpeech particularly vnto her, and ſaith in more ſpeciall manner, *Thy ſinnes are forgiuen thee, Thy faith hath ſaued thee.* *Ver.48.50.*

Laſtly, that ſhee might depart a ioyfull and bleſſed woman indeed, wanting nothing which might make for the peace of her conſcience, he giues her a moſt ſweet farewell, ſaying, *Goe in peace.* 5 *Maries happy farewell. Verſe 50. The application of the firſt Example.*

Now let mee reaſon a little with you, concerning this woman: can you when you haue ſtrayned out your ſinnes to the vttermoſt, make your ſelfe as bad as this woman? No, you cannot, you may not, you dare not. For

how dare you ſlander your own ſelfe, when it is not any way lawfull to ſlander another? and if you bee bound to tender the good name of your brother as well as your owne, then it muſt needs follow, you are by nature moſt bound to tender your owne, If then you cannot denie, but you are by great ods out-matcht in this example, ſhew mee what ſound reaſon you can bring to prooue, why Ieſus Chriſt ſhould not intreate you as kindly, and ſhew you as much fauour as hee ſhewed to *Marie*: eſpecially when as your ſinnes (euen by your owne confeſſion) are neither ſo no-

Apply the plaiſter to the ſore that your ſoule may haue eaſe.

notorious, nor ſo apparant, and open in outward tranſgreſſions, to be ſeene and iudged by the World as hers were; And yet, for all that, your teares as many, your heart as much tormented with ſorrow, your kindneſſe as great to Chriſt in his members, and your deſire as vnfayned to bee wholy his, at his commandement. Did he regard her, and will hee reiect you? did hee not ſhew her a hard countenance, and wil hee looke ſowrely vpon you? did ſhee let not ſo much as one teare fall in vaine? did her teares moue him to compaſſion? and doe you thinke hee wil'

The teares you ſhed are not ſpilt, for the Lord hath put them all into his Bottell.

Pſal. 50. 8.

will not haue pittie vpon you, & put all your teares into his Bottle? were many ſinnes forgiuen her, and can any of your ſinnes be vnpardoned? was her faith ſtrong to ſaue her, and ſhall your faith want ſtrength to ſaue you? did Chriſt for a fare-well bid her goe in peace, and will hee ſend you away empty without peace? No verily. If you thinke ſo, you think much amiſſe: and therefore ſuch a thought muſt not depart without ſome due chaſtizement.

A familiar reſemblance.

Suppoſe there is a man of ſo great wealth, that knowes no end of his goods. And ſuppoſe that this man hath many debters,

ters, that owe him verie great ſummes of money. As for example, ſome owe him thouſands, ſome hundreds, and ſome many ſcores of pounds. Amongſt them all there is one poore man, who owes him twenty pounds, twentie nobles, or twentie ſhillings, which hee is no way able to pay, nor any penie thereof, if he ſhould bee caſt in Priſon, and lye there till hee rot. If this great rich man ſhall cauſe Proclamation to be made that all his debters ſhould come to him, profeſſing ſolemnely, he will frankly and freely forgiue them, all, vpon this condition, that they will but confeſſe

Hee that forgiues a great debt will readily forgiue a ſmall.

feſſe and acknowledge the debt to be due, bee it more or leſſe. If the poore man ſhould come in among the reſt of his debters, and confeſſe himſelfe to owe him ſuch a ſumme as I haue named, lay forth his pouertie, and therewithall humbly vpon his knees with teares beſeech him to ſhew ſome fauour toward him: ſhould not hee in this caſe haue good hope to be forgiuen, eſpecially if before his face he ſhould ſee one to haue thouſands forgiuen for a word of his mouth? The Wiſeman ſaith, *Hee that hideth his ſinnes ſhall not proſper: but he that confeſſeth, and forſaketh ſhall haue*

Pro. 28.13.

haue mercie. To this agreeth that which is written by the holy Apoſtle; *If we acknowledge our ſins, God is faithfull and iuſt to forgiue vs our ſinnes, and to cleanſe vs from all vnrighteouſneſſe.* And I beſeech you, marke how ſweetly the Prophet ſpeaks to your hart when he ſaith, *The Lord is full of compaſſion and mercie, ſlow to anger and of great kindneſſe: hee will not alway chide, neither keepe his anger for euer. He hath not dealt with vs after our ſinnes, nor rewarded vs according to our iniquities. For as high as the Heauen is aboue the Earth, ſo great is his mercie towards them that* 1. Iohn 1. 9.

that feare him. As farre as the Eaſt is from the Weſt: ſo far hath he remoued our ſins from vs. As a Father hathcompaſſion his children ſo hath the Lord compaſſion on them that feare him: for he knowes whereof wee be made: hee remembreth that we are but duſt, Pſal. 103.8,9,10,11,12,13,14

Labour to apply if you deſire to haue comfort.

Theſe things concerne you very neerely: and therefore I am ſo much the rather to intreat you, not to make waſh-way of them: but as they doe neerly concerne you and your good, ſo to lay them as neere to your heart, by reuerent Meditation, that your ſoule may find a gracious and comfortable bleſſing. The

The ſecond Example which I would haue you to conſider and thinke on verie throughly, is written in the firſt Chapter of the Prophet *Eſay*, and the eighteenth Verſe, where the Lord makes a maruailous large offer of great mercie, vnto a people who had highly offended him, I meane the people of Iſrael. To theſe Iſraelites in moſt louing manner the Lord ſpeaketh, *Come*, ſaith he, *let vs reaſon together, though your ſins were as crimſon, they ſhall be made white as ſnow; though they were red as ſcarlet, they ſhall bee as wooll.* What the offer is you heare; and how great it

A ſecond Example of the great Rebellion of Iſrael.

Eſay 1.18.

it is, your selfe is able to iudge: euen so large an offer of mercy as none can be greater. In one word, it is as if the Lord should say, O Israel thou hast sinned against mee thy good God most grieuously, and hast deserued that I should not only punish thee sharply, but for euer cast thee cleane out of my fauour. Notwithstanding, vpon thine vnfained Repentance for all thy sinnes past, and a resolute purpose of amendment hereafter, I am content to forgiue and forget them all, and to giue thee my gracious generall pardon, to acquit and discharge thee of all and euerie one of thine

A generall pardon offered.

thine iniquities that not ſo much as any one of thē ſhall be able to condemne thee in this World, or in that which is to come.

The curſed condition of the Iſraelites.

Heere I pray you conſider with me, the eſtate and condition of this people, at the time of this louing offer: and therewith alſo conſider, what cauſe there was why the Lord ſhould ſhew them ſo great fauor. Begin at the ſecond Verſe of the fore-named Chapter, and marke aduiſedly what manner of complaint the Lord takes vp againſt them.

1 An Appeale to al the creatures of diſobedience.

Firſt, hee calles Heauen and Earth with all the Creatures therein to witneſſe their rebellion and diſ-

diſobedience againſt him.

2 Vnthankefulneſſe.

Secondly, hee challengeth them of ſo monſtrous vnthankfulneſſe, that it is too too ſhamefull: for he ſhewes they were ſo farre gone in this point, that the brute beaſts, euen the Oxe and the Aſſe, being dumbe Creatures, without reaſon, were more thankefull in their kind, to their Owners for their Fodder and Prouender, then they were for ſo many thouſands of Bleſſings, and Graces, which hee had freely and bountifully beſtowed on them and theirs in this and for a better life.

3 A large Inditement.

Thirdly, in the third Verſe hee drawes out againſt them a verie ſubſtan-

stantiall Inditement both for wordes and matter, wherein hee layes forth all their ill behauiour, and paints them out in most liuely colors, calling them with great detestation, *A sinfull Nation, a people laden with iniquitie, a seed of the wicked, corrupt children* Esay 1.3.

Fourthly, hee prooues this Inditement and euerie part thereof, by charging them to their faces with Murder and Bloud, by reason of their horrible oppression, & cruelty towards all in generall, but more specially towards the poor, the widow, the stranger, & the Fatherles: whom they ought aboue all others to haue spared, and to haue re-

4 A proofe of the Inditement. Vers. 15. 17

releeued them by expresse commandement from God himselfe. This is done in the fifteenth and seuenteenth Verses. In the practice of which sinnes, and all other kind of filthines, they were such exquisite workmen, that they were more like the people of *Sodom* & *Gomorra* (whom the Lord with fire from Heauen destroyed) then that people whome the Lord had chosen, & pickt out from all the Nations of the World, to be a peculiar and a holy people vnto himselfe.

Verse 10.

Exod. 19. 5, 6

5 Hypocrites in the seruice of God.

Fiftly, they were such hollow hearted Hypocrites in all the outward exercises of Religion, that the

the Lord deteſted all their Sacrifices, and vtterly abhorred all their Prayers, as you may reade in the 11. 12, 13, 14, and 15. Verſes.

To make an end with ſo bad a people, as lightly could not bee worſe, they were ſo deſperate, and hardned in their wickednesse, that they were paſt cure, and verie ſmall hope (if any at all, of the greater part) of their amendment, becauſe the Lord had aſſayed by all good meanes, to bring them to ſome goodneſſe. Hee had wooed them with bleſſings, & feared them with his ingdements: hee had chaſtized them often with Rods, and many times ſcour-

2. Sam. 7. 14 Verſe 5. 6.

ſcourged them with the plagues of the Children of men: but all in vaine; the more they were corrected, the worſe they were, and grew to bee more deſperate, as appeares out of the fift and ſixt Verſes. After all this badde dealing, as though they had beene no ſuch lewd and graceleſſe people, or as though they had not offended ſo grieuouſly, nay rather as if the Lord had done them ſome great wrong, he ſeekes to them (wheras they ſhould haue both ſued and ſought to him) that there might be a treatie of peace and a full reconciliation made betweene them. For which purpoſe hee offers in moſt friend-

The Lord entreats peace at their hãds which had highly offended him.

friendly and louing manner, to commune with them, ſaying, *Come let vs reaſon together.* *Verſe* 18.

Now giue mee leaue once againe to deale with your conſcience in this point. Charge your ſoule with as many ſinnes as euer you can poſſibly call to minde, in any part of your life, either before or ſince your calling, in ignorance or in knowledge, in youth or in age, howſoeuer, or with whomſoeuer you haue committed them, either by thought, word, or deed, in the light of the day, or in the darkneſſe of the night. Bind them all in one bundle, caſt them into the one end of the bal- A particular application of the former example.

lance : when you haue ſo done, take vp the ſinnes of this people, put them into the other end, and weigh them together without any deceit.

Nay, for this once you ſhall haue leaue to ſhew your beſt cunning, and ſee if you can make your end heauier. If you cannot (as I am ſure you cannot, except you will vſe ſome notable deceit, which will bee ſoone found out, ſo as you ſhall neuer bee able to anſwere it) then know you, and let your conſcience, alſo vnderſtand, that if the Lord ſaid vnto a wicked people, rebellious, and hard-hearted, and frozen in ſinne, *Come*; he doth much

much more ſay to you, whoſe Conſcience is ſo tender, whoſe heart melteth into Riuers of teares, and who would ſo faine leaue your ſinne, *Come*, and againe, *come*, let vs two reaſon together. For, although thy ſinnes bee in thine owne ſight as crimſon, yet ſhall they be made as white as ſnow: though they be (to thy ſeeming) as red as euer was the deepeſt ſcarlet, yet they ſhall bee as white as any wooll; becauſe they ſhall bee all ſo perfectly ſcowred and waſhed in the bloud of Ieſus Chriſt, as not any one of them ſhall bee able to condemne thee, either in this world, or in the world to come.

A ſtrong reaſon to proue and perſwade

1. *Iohn* 1. 7
Rom. 8. 1.
2. *Cor.* 5. 21.

*Mat.*11.28 Another reaſon of great weight: will you not come when your Sauiour calleth you for your good

And that you may bee the more bolde to come, behold, your ſweet Sauiour *(who being made ſinne for you, that you might bee made the righteouſneſſe of God)* ſaith alſo vnto you, *come*: yea for your further encouragement hee offers, and is readie to take you by the hand, and to goe with you himſelfe vnto the Father, for whoſe ſake you muſt needes bee moſt heartily welcome. And if you ſhall thus anſwere your Sauiour Ieſus Chriſt, that gladly you would come, but that your ſinnes doe ſo clogge, and loade your heart with ſorrow: then heare how againe he replyes vpon you, ſaying:

If

If the caſe ſtand ſo with thee then come in any wiſe, yea therefore the rather come. For, if thy ſins doe put thee to paine, and be as a heauie burden, too bigge for thee to beare, come thy way, and lay them all vpon my ſhoulders: for my back is broad enough to beare them all, were they neuer ſo many, I am well content to beare the whole loade of them mine owne ſelfe, that thou maiſt be fully and for euer diſcharged. For ſuch Sinners doe I call, and ſuch Sinners onely will I ſaue, as are in paine, and throughly tyred with ſenſe and ſorrow of their ſinnes. As for ſuch Sinners as haue

The tyred Sinner may boldly come to Chriſt.

Mat. 11 28

Marke that Chriſt will ſaue humbled Sinners & none other

ſtore of ſinnes hanging vp-on them, and either doe not feele them to bee any burden or care for no help, I haue nothing to do with them, neither will I be any Sauiour vnto them. For, *the whole need not the Phyſician, but the ſicke, I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.*

Mat. 9. 12, 13.

You haue a moſt ſure word of the Prophet, to which you ſhall doe well to take good heed, and to treaſure it vp in your heart for your euerlaſting good: *Let the wicked forſake his wayes, and the vnrighteous his owne imaginations, and returne vnto the Lord, and hee will haue mercy vpon him: and to our God, for he*

Iſay 58. 7.

is verie readie to forgiue. *Dauid* a worthy patterne of godlinesse, through sloth, his owne corruption, and Satans malice, sinned grossely with as much aduantage to the blasphemous Aduersarie as any religious Professour could doe: yet when with vnfained sorrow and hatred hee confessed, *I haue sinned against the Lord*, the Prophet *Nathan* instantly answered, *The Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not dye.* 2. Sam. 12. 13. Among all the Kings of Israel, *there was none like Ahab; who solde himselfe to worke wickednes in the sight of the* LORD, *whom Iezebel his Wife prouoked:* when for murde-

ring

ring of *Naboth* he did but counterfeit Repentance, he obtained this fauour from God, that the euill which was threatned against him should not be in his daies.

1. King. 21. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29.

But *Manasses*, King of Iudah, is painted out as a Monster not to bee matched for his wickednesse, his Apostasie, Idolatrie, Crueltie, Witch-craft, Charming, Sorcerie, &c. His boldnesse was such, that he bearded the Lord in his owne House, he despised his Word, he abused and mis-vsed the LORDS Prophets so farre that the LORD could not endure him, but sent him fast bound in fetters & chaines to Babel. When hee was there

there in tribulation, *Hee prayed vnto the Lord his God, and humbled himſelfe greatly before the God of his Fathers, and prayed vnto him, and God was entreated of him, and heard his Prayer, and brought him againe to Ieruſalem.* The Parables of the loſt ſheepe and Prodigall Sonne are verie familiar: *Peter* an excellent Apoſtle foyled himſelfe with a deſperate three-folde denyall of his only Soueraigne Sauiour. But the Lord Ieſus turned backe and looked mercifully vpon him for his comfortable recouerie: *Saul* was a cruell Perſecutor of the Goſpell, as himſelfe confeſſeth, *But he was*

2. *Chron.* 33 1, 2. *to the* 14. *Verſe.*

Mat. 18. 11

Luke 22 57 58, 59, 60, 61.

Gal. 1, 13.

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1. Tim. 1. 13, 14, 15, 16.

receiued to mercy, that Iesus Christ might first shew on him all long suffering vnto the ensample of them, which shall in time to come beleeue in him to eternall life. These are so many Cloudes of Witnesses to compasse your soule, that you may cast away whatsoeuer may discourage you, and repose your selfe vpon the assurance of Gods mercie in Christ Iesus.

Thus farre I haue endeuoured to satisfie your first and maine obiection, and to my power aymed at this marke, namely, to pacifie your troubled Conscience with this comfortable and sound perswasion, That *being iustified by*

Rom. 5. 1.

Faith,

Faith, you haue peace toward God through our Lord Iesus Christ, by whome you haue boldnesse and entrance vnto God the Father; and that by the powerfull working of Gods Spirit, *which is the Spirit of Adoption which you haue receiued whereby you cry Abba Father. The same Spirit beareth witnesse with your Spirit, that you are the Childe of God. And if you be a Childe, then are you also an Heire of God, and a ioynt Heire with Christ.* And therefore not I, but Gods holy Spirit (whose words you ought both to regard & reuerence) saith vnto you in this wise: *Let us goe boldly vnto the thron of*

Ephes. 3. 12

Rom. 8. 15, 16, 17.

Heb. 4. 17.

of grace, that wee may receiue mercy and finde grace to helpe in time of need.

Labour to cast off fear when God wold haue you hold. You are louingly called to come to a louely and mercifull Throne.

I beseech you, marke aduisedly that the Author of the Epistle calleth vpon you to goe, and to goe boldly. But whether wold he haue you goe? forsooth to the Throne. And to what Throne? Not to a Throne of Iustice, of Wrath and Condemnation, but to a Throne of Grace and Mercie. It is indeed a Throne of Iustice, of Wrath, and Condemnation: but not to you, nor any such as you are. The Throne against your comming is couered and hanged all ouer from end to end, both wide and side,

ſide, with moſt rich and coſtly cloth of Grace and Mercie. The hangings are all of Grace, and throughout embrodered with nothing but Mercie. View them your ſelfe, look vpon them throughly, and you ſhall find all Mercie, and nothing elſe but Mercie. Therefore you are willed to come to this Throne boldly, becauſe it is a Throne of Grace & Mercie. And that you may know before hand what you ſhall gaine by your comming thether, you are told plainly, and truly, you ſhall find (that which your ſoule moſt longeth after) ſtore of Grace, and ſo much Mercie as may helpe you,

Mercie welcomes you: therefore perſwade your ſelfe you are welcome.

You must needs be welcome, for the Iudge is your great freind euen your all-sufficient Sauiour.

you, when you shall stand in most neede of Mercie. Thus must it needs be, and otherwise it cannot bee: because the Iudge himselfe, who sits vpon the Throne, is a Iudge full of Mercie, cladde altogether with rich Robes of Mercie, and your great friend, who will shew you all the fauour that may bee. For why? hee is Iesus your Sauiour, who will in no case suffer you to miscarrie. Therfore he himselfe saith: *Those whom thou gauest me haue I kept, & none of thē is lost.* Again, in another place *I giue vnto them eternall life, and they shall neuer perish, neither shall any plucke them out of my hand. My Father which gaue them me is*

Mat. 1. 21.

Iohn 17. 12.

greater then al, & none is able to take thē out of my Fathers hād. I & my Father are one. If yet, for all that hath bin said, there doth remain any scruple, I will furnish you with one place more where the God of all comfort speakes to your heart, *Reioyce, O Heauen, and bee ioyfull O Earth: burst forth into Prayse, O Mountaines: for God hath comforted his people, and I will haue mercy on his afflicted. But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken mee, and my Lord hath forgotten mo. Can a Woman forget her child, & not haue compassion on the son of her womb? though they should forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I haue grauen thee vpon the palme of my hands.*

Iohn 10.28, 29, 30.

Esay 49.13, 14, 15, 16.

The ſecõd Obiection and Anſwere. The troubled mind cannot apply Chriſt to it ſelfe.

Heere is good occaſion offered to anſwer a ſecond obiection of yours: which is, that you beleeue, that Ieſus Chriſt is a perfect & able Sauiour, but not your Sauiour: that hee ſaith come, but hee ſaith not come, to you. But I will proue hee ſpeaketh as well to you as to any other: and that as particularly, and as plainly as if he ſhould call you by your name, and ſay come *M.P.E.* I ſpeake vnto thee by name.

In the Prophet *Eſay*, the Lord God after hee had in the end of the former Chapter, ſhewed what fearful iudgements he had reſolued to bring vpon the Iſraelites for their ſinnes, be-

becauſe they would not walke in his wayes, nor be obedient vnto his Law; leſt the godly which were among them ſhold be too much diſcomfited, and throwne downe too low, he ſpeakes moſt graciouſly & particularly to them with moſt ſweet and comfortable wordes; ſaying: *But now thus ſaith the Lord that created thee, O Iacob and hee that formed thee O Iſrael, Feare not: for I haue redeemed thee, I haue called thee by thy name, thou art mine. When thou paſſeſt through the waters I will be with thee, and thorow the flouds, that they doe not ouer-flow thee: thou ſhalt not bee burnt, neither*

ſhall

Shall the flame kindle vpon thee, for I am the LORD *thy God the holy one of Israel thy Sauiour, &c.*

Esay 43.1. 2,3,&c.

You will grant, that in those wordes which you find thus written, in *Matthew*, Chapter, 11, Verse 28. *Come vnto mee all you that are wearie and laden, Christ Iesus* calleth all sinners generally, You are one among the rest. Therefore he cals you. For hee saith, *he came to call sinners to repentance.*

Aduise your selfe well, that he that knowes you calls you.

Mat. 9.13.

Secondly, in the forenamed words he cals such sinners onely, particularly and by name, as are weary and laden with their sins. Are your sinnes pleasant to your palate, and sweet vn-

Iudge you whether you bee called.

to

to your taste? Doth the remembrance of your sins make you laugh, as though yee were tickled, when you thinke vpon them? Is it the ioy and pleasure of your sinnes, which drawes so great store of salt teares from your eyes, and fetcheth so many deepe sighes from your heart? Do your sinnes lye vpon your Conscience like some little light Feather? or rather do they not presse and hold you downe as a wonderfull weightie burden? Is not the burthen so heauie that you cannot containe your selfe but cry out with the Prophet, *There is nothing sound in my flesh because of thine anger; neyther* Psal 38.3,4

ther is there reſt in my bones
Pſal.40.12. becauſe of my ſinne. For mine iniquities are gone ouer my head, and as a weightie burden they are too heauie for me. And againe, My ſinnes haue taken ſuch hold vpon me, that I am not able to looke vp: yea, they are moe in number than the haires of my head: therefore my heart fayleth me.

If you bee in this caſe, then may you know, if you wil know, that which ſhall doe you good, that he ſpeaks to you by name, and ſaith vnto you, Come boldly and feare not, I wil eaſe thee of all thoſe thy ſinnes, which are ſo great a burthen to thy Conſcience, and will giue thee a gra-

gracious generall pardon in my death and paſſion. Moreouer, I will from tóp to toe couer and clothe thee with the rich Robes of mine owne righteouſneſſe vnto the full aſſurance of euerlaſting life.

The third Obiection followeth: that your faith is weake, & full of doubting; yea ſo weake, as you are fully perſwaded there is no childe of God hath ſo weake a faith as you haue. But hee that neuer complained of weakneſſe of faith neuer had any ſound ſauing faith: he that neuer doubted of ſaluation, neuer beleeued rightly, nor had any good aſſurance of ſaluation; for hee that

The third Obiection and Anſwere. The troubled mind complains of the weakneſſe of faith. M. *Perkins.*

that beleeues most hath many doubtings, as a sound man feeles many grudgeings of many Diseases, which if he had not health he could not feele. *Dauid* doubted; as appeares by his owne wordes vttered after this manner: *Why art thou cast downe my soule, and vnquiet within mee? waite on GOD, or hope in God: for I will giue him thankes for the helpe of his presence.* Thus hee complaines of weaknesse and doubting, twice in one Psalme, *Psal.* 42. 5. 11. and againe, *Psal.* 43. 5. He vseth the same words In another place hee cryes out most bitterly: *Will the Lord absent himselfe for euer, and*

Psal. 77. 7, 8, 9.

will

will he shew no more fauour? Is his mercy cleane gone for euer? doth his promise faile for euermore? hath God forgotten to bee mercifull? hath hee shut vp his tender mercies in displeasure?

I perceiue it fareth with you as it doth with one that is greatly troubled with the Tooth-ache, Gout, Stone, or some other strong Disease, who being in verie great paine, in the extremitie thereof cries out, that there was neuer any Creature in the World so cruelly tormented. And why saith he so? forsooth, because he feeles his owne paine; and no other mans beside: therefore he speaks of that which himselfe feeleth,

Euery man complaines of his owne paine.

leth, and not of that which hee doth not feele. For there bee a great many moe as greatly tormented as he: but hee thinkes not so, because hee doth not feele it so: Thus doe you deale, you are greatly troubled with the weakneſſe of your owne faith, which you feele: therefore according to your feeling you complaine, that none hath so weake a faith as you haue: notwithſtanding there bee a great number beſides your ſelfe, who are as much troubled this way as you. But I will take your owne words. You ſay your faith is weake. Yea? then you grant you haue faith. And therefore ſay I,

Many deare Seruants of God are greatly grieued for the weakneſſe of their faith.

or

or rather the Lord himselfe for your comfort, you cannot possibly perish. *For God so loued the World, that hee gaue his onely begotten Sonne, that whosoeuer beleeueth in him, might not perish, but haue euerlasting life.* *Iohn* 3.16.

If you haue faith, if it be but as much as a graine of Mustard-seed, *Matt.* 17. 20. *Marke* 9.24. that faith taketh hold of *Iesus Christ* in whome there is all sufficiencie of saluation, and in whome you are complete, *Colossians* 2. 10. So that whatsoeuer doubt ariseth in your heart, or is enforced by the malicious enemie, by reason of any want, or weakenes, it need M *Greenh.*

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not dismay you; because you are not your owne Saviour, but Christ hath saued you, who of God is made vnto you Wisdome, Righteousnesse, Sanctification, and Redemption, that you may not glorie in your selfe but in him.

And because the question is about your faith, I would haue you to vnderstand that faith is a full vndoubted perswasion, wholly to repose & settle, to place and put our trust and confidence for our Saluation in Christ alone, whome the Father hath sealed, and in whom only you doe beleeue, renouncing all conceit of your owne Righteousnesse, or

of

of any other Creature, Saint or Angell, relying & resting vpon the merits of his Death and Passion. But you haue not that sensible and liuely feeling of faith which you desire: And what then? *Ergo*, you haue no sauing faith? your reason is not good. Say that you should fall into a great swowne and continue therein sometime, & your selfe for a time neyther see nor heare, breath nor mooue in your owne feeling or sight of others; is there therefore no life, because it apprares not for a time, but after a while will shew it selfe? So is it with you being ouer-born with the extremitie of

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temptation; you seeme to your selfe to haue lost the light and life which you once enioyed: Yet when the tempest shall bee ouer, and the countenance of the Lord shall shine vpon you: faith, which is hid for a time, shal get life and shew it selfe as the Trees in the Spring after the sharpe and cold Winter.

The afflicted soule desires nothing more feruently then to beleeue, where it feeles not the present operation of comfort by faith; which desire argueth a secret sense, which cannot easily be discerned, together with assurance of better comfort in time to come; according to that

our

our Saviour in the Gospel: *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after Righteousnesse: for they shall be filled.* This it is with you, and therefore your state is better then you thinke: for, this your bewayling of vnbeleefe is not only a step to comfort, but a certaine proofe and demonstration that comfort shall come: for the Lord, working by his Spirit, in your heart, groanes and sighes, which cannot bee expressed, assures you that *the Lord is at hand*: so that in due time hee will in this particular bring abundance of comfort to your Conscience.

But your faith (as you

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A weake faith is a good faith therefore make much of it, & labour to ſtrengthen it.

ſay) is ſo weake, that you cannot thinke it to be any faith at all. And I againe doe anſwere you with a better warrant then your thought, that a weake faith is a faith, yea a good & ſound faith. The weakneſſe of faith doth not take away the nature and being of faith, that becauſe there is weakneſſe in it, therefore it ſhould ceaſe to be a faith. Will you ſay a weake man is no man, becauſe of his weakneſſe? No, for he is a man though neuer ſo weake, as long as there is any life and breath in him. Neither doth his weakneſſe take away his goodneſſe: for he may be a very good man, though

A weake man is a man.

he

he be very weake: So say I of your faith, the weakneſſe thereof taketh not away the goodneſſe. It is a good, a ſound, and a liuely faith, although it bee weake. I neuer yet heard of any beleeuing man or woman, but haue complayned of the weakneſſe of their faith. Nay for my part, I haue marked it in ſundry examples, that the more godly and beleeuing, the more they haue complayned. I could, from mine owne experience, name diuers to prooue this point, and ſome of them well knowne vnto your ſelfe. But I will name ſome one or two out of the Scripture, and leaue the

Weaknes of Faith a generall complaint of all the godly.

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reſt to your owne good conſideration.

Mark.9.24 Example of a weake Faith in a very good man.

You reade in the Goſpell of *Marke*, the ninth Chapter and the foure and twentieth Verſe, of ſo good and faithfull a man, as you will your ſelfe confeſſe, he had a true and ſincere faith becauſe he ſaid vnto *Ieſus Chriſt*, *Lord, I beleeue*. Neuertheleſſe this good man was ſicke of your diſeaſe, and felt his faith to bee weake, yea, very weake; and therefore he entreates the Lord *Ieſus* very earneſtly, yea crying out with teares, ſaith, *Lord helpe my vnbeliefe, &c.*

The Apoſtles weak in Faith.

Againe, you reade in Saint *Lukes* Goſpell, the ſeuenteenth Chapter and fift

fifte Verse, of the holy Apostles, whome our Sauiour CHRIST had chosen to preach, and by their preaching to beget faith in others: yet euen these men doe in like manner finde and feele great want and weakneſſe in their owne faith. For which cauſe they put vp their humble Supplication vnto their Lord and Master *Ieſus Christ*, *that he would increaſe their faith.*

So that now you ſee verie plainely, there is no cauſe, why you ſhould too much diſcourage your ſelf, with the conſideration of the weakneſſe of your faith. Becauſe the beſt and moſt faithfull Seruants of

Weakneſſe and wants will waite vpon vs to our graue.

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God, doe halt of this sore as well as you, and shall doe as long as they liue in this World. For there is no perfection of any good Grace in this life. *Wee see and know in part*, and therfore must needes also beleeue and practise in part. Perfection is no where to bee found but in Heauen, that wee may long to bee there, and so be fully perfect. God vseth this as a holy and good meanes righly to humble you, and many of his deare Children for your good: that by the true feeling of this weaknesse, and many other infirmities; you may see how much need you haue to runne continually for

1. Cor. 13. 9.

Weaknes of Faith a speciall meanes to humble vs.

strength

ſtrength and ſuccor at the hands of your ſweet Sauiour, who hath thorowly ſupplyed all your wants, and who will ſo ſtrengthen you, that your faith (though neuer ſo weake to your owne feeling) may neuer faile you. For which purpoſe I would haue you to lay ſure holde on theſe words, full of ſweet comfort, deliuered vnto *Peter* by our Sauiour *Christ*, for the ſtrengthning of all the faithfull. *Simon, Simon, Satan hath deſired to winnow you as Wheate: but I haue prayed for thee that thy faith faile not.* Luk 22.31.

All the faithfull are as deare to Chriſt as *Peter*.

Marke I pray you how Ieſus Chriſt promiſeth to pray for *Peter*, and not for him

him onely but for all the faithfull.

Hee prayeth for all the faithfull as well as for *Peter*, and for you.

For, is hee onely *Peters* Sauiour? Is hee not also the Sauiour of all the faithfull in the World? Is he not your Sauiour as wel as *Peters*? yes truly. Then hee will pray for you also. For so he saith in that most sweete Prayer which hee makes to his heauenly Father, for all the faithfull which shall beleeue in him to the Worlds end. *I pray not for these alone, but for them also which shal beleeue in mee through their word.* And if he in whom onely the Father is wholly and altogether well pleased, and for whose sake hee cannot bee displeased, with

Iohn 27.20.

Mat. 3.17.

with you, doe pray for you, shall not hee bee heard, and his Prayer fully granted? Yes, it cannot be denied.

But yet you say hee speakes to *Peter*, and promiseth to pray for him by name. Yea, and that is as much as if hee should call you by your name, and say that hee will pray for you, and for so many as Satan hath any desire to winnow. But Sathan hath a great desire not onely to winnow *Peter*, but all the rest of the faithfull also. For so are Christs wordes, saying, *Sathan desires to winnow, not thee, but you*: as if he should say, his malice is not against one alone,

Christ in *Peter* speakes to all the faithfull by name.

Sathans malice is deadly against the faithfull.

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lone, but against all. Therfore as all must looke to themselues: so Christ promiseth to pray for, so many as are winowed, & particularly for you, because you can tell that you are winnowed. And whereas it pleaseth the Lord thus to winnow and sift your faith, you may be sure not to lose, but to gaine thereby. For this you know, The more the good Corne is fanned, and winnowed, the cleaner it is; and, the ofter Gold is put into the fining Pot, the more pure and excellent it is. To this end therfore are you fined after this manner, *that the tryall of your Faith being much more precious then*

1. Pet. 1. 7.

Gold

Gold that perisheth, though it bee tryed with fire, might bee found vnto your Prayse and Honour, and Glorie at the appearing of IESVS CHRIST. But to end this point, let me aduise you of this one thing, that you be not so farre discouraged with want of faith and feeling according to that which you desire and faine would attaine, that you forget to acknowledge Gods Mercy for that measure of faith which you haue receiued. Indeed, I confesse, that in this your earnest and great desire after a continuall increase of faith, you are like to many doubtfull Worldlings, who are so greedie to increase their

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their wealth, that the more they haue, the more they desire: through which desire they deprive themselues of the vse of that they haue, and forget they haue it; yea, and which is more, they will euen protest and sweare that they haue not that they haue in great aboundance. This is a verie common thing with many miserable Earth-wormes, that if a man which knows their estate, doe but say to them, that they are greatly gathered, and so well-moniede, that it were a small matter for them to lend such a summe, or to giue so and so, to such as want, & bee in necessitie; they will by and by answere, with great

great indignation, they haue no mony, they: where should they haue it? they can but marueil they should say so, and also that they would be glad for to borrow themselues, &c.

Thus you deale because you haue not so much faith as you heartily desire, so much repentance, so much patience, so much godlinesse, &c. Therefore you haue none, or else so little as that it is not worth the speaking of: Yet such as know your estate by acquaintãce with you, which haue obserued and considered your Zeale to God, and Loue to his Seruants, can say to the contrarie: therefore for conclusion, take

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take heed of this, that you wrong not your selfe, and the grace of God, which you haue receiued; least you prouoke him for your vnthankfulnesse to take from you that which you haue: and then you haue iust cause to blame your selfe, that you so lightly esteemed his gracious fauour shewed to you.

The fourth Obiection and Answere concerning Prayer.

Now I come to answere your fourth Obiection, That you cannot pray. What, can you not pray at all? Can yee neuer pray? Yes, you thanke God for his mercie, you can pray sometimes: but neither so often, nor so zealously as you desire, and as your need inforceth you. Some-

time

time you pray, but verie coldly, and with very little or no feeling. Sometime you pray more earnestly: &, for all that, you finde small comfort. And sometimes though you do what you can, you cannot pray, for your life. This is, as I know by some wofull experience a verie just and true complaint: yet I remember when I demanded whether you could pray at any time, you could not denie but you could pray sometime; and I am perswaded with good feeling and sweet comfort to your soule. Whereupon I proue once againe to your conscience, that you haue a true faith vnto saluation; be-

Cold Prayer better then no Prayer.

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Rom. 10. 13.

because Prayer is an vndoubted, and plaine fruit of a liuely faith accompanied with euerlasting saluation: For, *whosoeuer calleth vpon the Name of the Lord shall bee saued.*

Prayer no common, but a speciall Gift giuen to the Elect.

Praier is not a common gift, common to all, but a speciall gift proper only to the Elect, as Faith and Repentance. The Apostle saith, *All men haue not faith,* 2. *Thessal.* 3. 2. So say I, all men haue not the gift to pray. A wicked man cannot pray, because hee cannot beleeue: for Prayer is a most excellent fruit of faith, and an vnseparable companion of a liuely saiuing faith. Therefore the Apostle saith, *How shall*

they

they call on him in whom they haue not beleeued? Hypocrites, I confesse, can word it at large, and make a clerkly semblance of zealous and deuout Prayer, it may be verie profitable to others, but most vncomfortable to themselues, because God hath giuen sentence against them, saying, *This people comes neere me with their mouth, & honours me with their lips, but haue remooued their heart far from me.* And our Lord and Sauiour counts their wordie Prayers but as vaine babbling and froth.

Rom. 10. 14

Esay 29. 13.

Mat. 6. 7.

The vngodly haue not this gift in truth, or in any good measure: howsoeuer they haue many other ex-

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excellet gifts of Wisdome, Counsell, and Learning, yet they want this: which the Prophet doth plainely auouch saying of them, *that they call not vpon God:* as though hee should say, they do many other things, but they doe not this, and no marueil: for indeede they cannot, because they want that Spirit which should teach them to pray for the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and prayeth in vs. Yea this same Spirit of Sanctification which hath wrought a gracious measure of Faith and Repentance in your heart, hath taught you also to pray, & to take so great delight therein, that you are glad

Psal. 144.

Rom. 8. 26.

when

when you can pray your selfe, or can bee partaker with others whē they pray.

But you say sometimes you cannot pray at all, and therefore you doubt your selfe very much. If you could pray when you would, and as you would (beare with my plainnesse, for I speake from the feeling of mine owne heart) you would bee proud, you would thinke it were but a gift of nature, in your own power, and no gift of God: so should God lose his Glorie, so should you soone forget the right vse of a most notable spirituall heauenly blessing, and forget also to be thankful. Now you haue it but seldome,

Prayer is not a common Gift. The godly cannot alwaies pray as they would.

dome, not so often, or in so great measure as you would your self, you know from whome you receiue it. And when you haue it, you learne to vse it with more reuerence, and make more account of it, you take more ioy in it: and when you want it, you groane to God for it the more earnestly. It is verie needfull and expedient, that the Lord should exercise his chiefe and most choice Seruants, with the want of many Blessings and Graces, both for their bodies and soules.

The want of many beſſings & graces is very need full and profitable.

I To be ſick.

It is good sometimes to bee sicke, that wee may know how good a thing it is to enioy the benefit of health. It

It is good sometimes to be hunger-bitten, that our meat may be the more sauourie, that wee may bee the more thankfull for our food, that we may receiue and vse it more reuerently, and the more willingly releeue such as stand in need.

2 Hunger-bitten.

It is good for vs some nights to bee abridged of our naturall sleepe, that we may know, *It is the Lord who giues rest vnto his Beloued.*

3 To want sleepe. *Psal.* 127. 2.

It is verie meete wee should sometimes be troubled in conscience, that we may know how precious a blessing that is aboue all others, to enioy the peace of conscience, & to labour

4 To haue a troubled conscience Peace of conscience a precious Blessing

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aboue all things to attaine to it, and to maintaine the same. It is good for vs sometimes, to be cleane to seeke how to pray; to the end that when wee can pray, we may be the more humble, reuerent and thankfull.

But if you like to stand vpon this point, to vrge the same against your selfe, I will as in the sight of God, to his Glorie, and mine owne shame, confesse the Truth vnto you, as it is with mee in this thing. I haue more cause, a thousand folde, to doubt my selfe herein, then you haue, by reason of the great calling which the Lord hath laid vpon mee, being a Minister

nister and Teacher of the Word. Therefore the *Lord haue mercy vpon vs miserable wretched Sinners.* For my wicked euill heart is so narrow and barren in Prayer, that I cannot pray to any purpose, but very coldly, and vnsauourly for the most part, yea, sometimes I cannot pray at all. And this falles out not onely in my priuate Meditations, betweene GOD and mine owne soule, but in my daily Praiers: wherein I am constrained for the most part to plod on in an ordinarie course of words and matter, without change or varietie: whereas I know diuers worthy Preachers, in whome there is

such an excellent Spirit, that they chey can pray most powerfully vpon euerie occasion publikely or priuately: I cannot doe so. Nay, such is my wofull wretchednesse in performing this holy exercise, that if I be in companie at meate and am required to pray or giue thankes; a sudden feare doth so surpize mee that my breath is stopt vp, that I am not able to speake a word. By meanes whereof I am enforced to forbeare the conuersation of many gracious and comfortable friends. Yet to quicken my dull heart to a greater feruencie and conscience in Praier, the Lord hath

sharply spurred mee? For, after thirtie yeeres labour in the worke of the Ministerie I am now in my old age (with many others amongst whome I deserue not to bee numbred or named) deprived and silenced, for not conforming my selfe to some Church-Ceremonies, which I could neuer bee perswaded to vse, as the searcher of all hearts knowes best. And albeit I am yet cast out as vnfaithfull, and as a Vagrant, and exposed to great reproch, and many inconueniences; yet am I so vnapish to governe mine owne estate, and so farre from Christian compassion towards my Brethren,

that I cannot attain to any competent or comfortable meaſure of Grace in calling vpon God. Yet that the Lord may haue the honour of his owne grace, bee it neuer ſo ſmall, (for hee knowes, and by his goodneſſe, I alſo in ſome meaſure doe perceiue how needfull it is for me to bee abaſed with feeling of many great wants) ſometimes I thinke the Spirit of God doth teach mee to pray with much libertie, and comfort to my conſcience. And now and then I feele ſome ſlender ejaculations, and lifting vp of my weak heart vnto God. In one word, to ſay all the verie beſt that poſſibly I

can

can for my selfe; I would faine pray more feruently, repent more vnfainedly, beleeue more heartily, and liue more holily. But I am too too negligent and vnconscionable in the meanes which God hath mercifully sanctified for my good. This I confesse according to the Truth, that you may know you are no more alone in this point, then in the former; and to intreat you to pray for mee, following the good aduise of the holy Apostle Saint *Iames*, who counselleth vs, *to confesse our sinnes one to another, and to pray for one another.* Iames 5.16

But alas say you, how should I pray for you

True Prayer is not a set order of fine words.

when I cannot pray for my selfe? If you cannot pray in set wordes, and in fine order, can you not therefore pray at all? can you not sigh and groane inwardly, in the true feeling of your soule, as one that is so greatly oppressed with griefe, that hee hath not a tongue to vtter that which hee hath within his minde? If you can sigh and groane after this manner, bee of good comfort, for you haue learned long since, from some of your faithfull Teachers, who haue many times soundly taught this point from the Word of God, and that of purpose for the reliefe of weake consciences, that

you

you pray verie effectually. Your sighes are Prayers: which the Spirit, from whom they proceed, vnderstandeth right well, yea although there is not so much as any one word vttered to expresse them. Words are for our vnderstanding, that wee may thereby know one another meaning. But the holy Spirit which is our comfortable Schoolemaster, euen God which searcheth the hart, knowes the meaning of his owne Spirit in our secret thoughts before we speake, yea though we speake not at all. For as the Prophet *Dauid* saith, *Thou knowest our thoughts long before.* And the Apostle saith,

Acts 15.8.

Psal. 139.2.

Rom.8.26. the Spirit helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what to pray as we ought, but the Spirit it selfe maketh requests for vs with sighes, which cannot be expressed.

The sighes of the godly are acceptable Prayers.

These sighes breaking out violently from the consciences of the godly, are Praiers, and loud cries, acceptable to the Lord, piercing deeply into his eares, as appeares in Exodus 14.15. Where the Lord demandeth of Moses why hee cryed so vnto him, whereas the words of the Text make no mention of any one word hee spake or vttered.

I pray you tell mee this one thing: If the child of your

your owne bodie whome you loued dearely, and which is vnto you as your owne soule, shall be sicke; & being full of pain, shall moan himself vnto you tell you how sicke he is, where his paine doth hold him, & shall entreate you euen as you loue him, to doe what you can to ease him, will you not doe it both willingly and readily? yea, will you not doe whatsoeuer you are able euerie kinde of way for the ease of your deare Dearelinge? But if his paine shall increase and grow so great, that it takes away his speech, so as he is not able to speake a word, but to fetch deepe sighes and to

moane

moane himselfe vnto you by most grieuous groanes: will not these groanes pierce your heart more deeply, & cause the bowels of compassion to yerne in you more strongly, to straine your selfe euen to the vttermost of all your power, to afford him as much comfort as is possible, both by your selfe & others? shall the groaning of your Child worke great pitie in you, and shall not the mightie groanes of your poore sicke soule, moue the Lord your God to greater compassion? If in such a case you will bee so readie to heare & helpe, know you for certaintie, the Lord will bee more rea-

The Lord exceedeth all men in goodnesse and compassion; & therefore will heare and helpe you readily.

readie to heare and helpe, whensoeuer you shall in the anguish of your soule groane vnto him. For look how farre he exceeds you and all other in goodnesse: so farre also doth hee surpasse you and all other in Mercie and Compassion.

Beside all this, there is no Sacrifice more acceptable in the sight of God, then the sighes and groans of a troubled minde. For so saith the Prophet, *The Sacrifices of God are a contrite spirit, A contrite and broken heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.* Therefore make as good account of the groanes and sighes of the Spirit, as of any Prayer you can make, euen in the

Psal. 51. 17. The sighes of the spirit are to be regarded.

the best words you can deuise. And for a farewell of this matter, remember that the godly and good King *Ezekias*; could not in smooth and fine wordes, powre out his Prayers before the Lord in his great sickneſſe, but chatter like a Swallow or a Crane, as hee confeſſeth of himſelfe. Conſider alſo that the poore Publican being aſhamed of himſelfe, by reaſon of his ſinnes, and fearing to lift vp his eyes toward Heauen, could not deliuer his minde at large, in fit and choice wordes: but with much paine, at the laſt hee breakes forth after this maner, *O God be mercifull to me a Sinner.*

Ezekias could not pray, but chatter. *Iſay* 38.14.

The Publican praied feruently, but

Ne-

Neuertheleſſe our Sauiour Christ giueth ſentence on his ſide, that *he went home more iuſtified, than the proud Phariſie*, who had both wordes and wind at will.

Your fift Obiection, doth thus offer it ſelf, *That you cannot leaue ſinne.* And that which doth more trouble you, you cannot leaue thoſe ſinnes, which you haue vowed to leaue, but you fall againe into them. Firſt, you reaſon thus againſt your ſelf, that you cannot leaue ſinne. No maruell, for although you bee one of Gods Saints, and haue receiued the Spirit of Sanctification in meaſure, to fight the Lords

The fift Obiection and Anſwere, of leauing ſin. Sin cleaues too faſt to our nature, to part with it in haſte.

Lords Battels against sin, and Hell: yet haue you no Angell in this World, so as you can altogether cease to sinne; because you carrie, and shall carrie vnto your graue, a bodie, and soule subiect to sinne. For as the Twins which were in *Rebekahs* wombe, stroue together to her great griefe: so it is betweene the flesh, and the spirit in the Children of God; for these two are alwaies and euen will bee at deadly feude: as the Holy Ghost witnesseth where he saith: *The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, & the Spirit against the flesh: and these are two contrarie one to the other, so that you cannot doe the same things*

Gal. 5. 17.

things that you would. And the Apostle Peter saith, That the lusts of the flesh doe fight against the soule.

I. Pet. 2. 11.

Therefore you must fight this Battell euen so long as you haue breath & life. This enemie of yours is so strong, that hee will neuer bee fully ouercome vntill you haue ouer-mastred him by death. And then you shall haue a full and perfect Conquest ouer him and all your enemies. In the meane time, plucke vp a good heart, gird you fast with all your Christian Armour, put on your complete Harneſſe, as you find it set downe in the sixt Chapter of the Epistle written to the *Ephesians*: take

No perfect conquest ouer sinne vntill death.

Christian courage & Armour.

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Ephes. 6. 13, 14, &c.

Be carefull to fight Christ his Battell, & feare not the issue.

take your weapon in one hand, I meane the *Sword of the Spirit*, and your Buckler or Target in the other, that is to say, *the shield of Faith*. Lay about you lustily, with all the strength and cunning you haue. *Yea, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.* And feare not the issue, although you latch and catch many a sore blow, no though you bee foiled and wounded; because you haue a valiant Captaine *Christ Iesus*, your Sauiour, who hath already himselfe gotten the victorie for you, and who will not shrinke one foote from you, vntill such time as you also haue gotten the vict-

victories. *For in all these things wee are more then Conquerors through him that loued vs.* And that you may haue the more courage to fight this Field without fainting, vnderstand thus much, that all the faithfull doe ioyne hands with you to fight out this Battell. Rom. 8. 37.

All the faithfull doe fight one and the same Battell.

The holy Apostle *Paul* had receiued a great measure of Sanctification, aboue many thousands of Gods Children yet could not he get the full mastery ouer sinne, but that full sore against his will to his hearts griefe he fell into it. Therefore with sorrow of soule, hee complaines in the seuenth Chapter to the Ro-

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Rom. 7.19.

Romanes, *That the good which he would hee did not, but the euill which he would not, that did hee.* And that it may be wel vnderstood, that this was not onely a sharpe hot skirmish, for a short fit, but a set Battell to continue to the end of his life, you may reade how after sundrie and diuers grieuous complaints of his own weaknesse, and of the strength of sinne (as a man that is weatie of his life, for no cause but this onely, that hee could not leaue sinne) hee breakes out into these wordes of great passion. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliuer mee from the bodie of this death?* In which speech hee

Paul fought a bloudie field with sinne.

Verse 24.

hee doth bewray two things. First that hee could not leaue sinning, although it was his whole studie, and the onely thing among many, which hee most earnestly desired. Therefore hee calleth himselfe a wretched man, because hee carries about a bodie of sinne and death. Secondly, that hee had as longing a desire to cease from sin, as any man could haue. And therefore hee asketh this question, *Who shall deliuer me?*

Paul could not leaue sin as hee desired.

Now tell me, I beseech you, is it not thus with you? Would you not faine leaue sinne if you could, & that with all your hart? are you not weary of it, and sore

The godly would faine leaue sin, and so would you with all your hart.

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sore grieued for it? Must it not needes bee thus, because you complaine so greatly, you cannot leaue sinne? You sinne indeed, but not willingly, nor of set purpose; you delight not in any sinne, as the vngodly of whome *Salomon* speaketh, *Which reioyce in doing euill, and delight in the frowardnesse of the wicked.* Therefore the Prophet protesteth against them, that *they haue chosen their owne wayes, and their soule delighteth in their abominations*: you draw not sinne vnto you with cart-ropes, as the wicked doe, but you are violently drawne by the furie and violence of sin. You hunt not

Pro. 2. 14.

Esay 66. 3.
Esay 5. 18.
The godly sinne not willingly as the wicked.

not after iniquitie, to pur-
sue and follow after it,
with the entisements ther-
of. But sinne hunts and
pursues you, till you haue
lost both wind & strength:
and so it may bee, you are
many times taken prisoner.
In which case you are no
more to be blamed, then a
Souldier, who in Battell is
full sore against his will
taken Prisoner of his ene-
mies: which thing is most
manifest to your own con-
science, because when you
are taken, and you per-
ceiue it, you behaue your-
selfe as a man, which is fal-
len into his enemies hand.
For your heart is grieued,
and your soule wonderful-
ly troubled, your sleepe
de-

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departeth from you, you can eat no meate that doth you good, you take no pleasure in any worldly thing, there is no mirth in you, but you are all heavie and sad. If you will bee in company, where you are prouoked to be merrie, you laugh but for compa-nie: for it is but from the teeth forward.

The godly study how to breake off the fet-ters of sin.

To be short, so long as you are holden captiue of any sinne, you are wearie of your life. Therefore all your studie is how you may breake off the fetters of sinne, and be deliuered; whereto you apply all your wit, power, cunning and skill: And if through the great goodnesse of God,

you

you get any aduantage to escape, there was neuer any Fowle more glad of a faire day, or Bird that hath broken out of the Fowlers Net, more ioyfull, then you are of so happie deliuerance. And when you are deliuered, you are euer afterwards more carefull a great deale that you fall not againe into your enemies hand.

Againe, you make not a trade of sinne, to follow it daily and hourely as the workers of iniquitie, who follow it as carefully and continually as any man followes his occupation whereby he must liue. But the trade which you follow, and the way wherein

The wicked doe trade in sinne. *Mat.* 7.23. *Psal.* 1.2,3.

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you walke with delight, is the continuall Meditation of the Law of God, with an earnest desire to practise it in your whole conuersation. Your minde and affections are not set vpon the Earth, but vpon Heauen, and vpon those things which may bring you to Heauen. Therefore in the true acknowledgement of Gods great Mercie towards you, you may with peace to your soule say with the Apostle *Paul* in the seuenth Chapter to the Romanes, and the fiue and twentieth Verse, *I thanke God through our Lord Iesus Christ, because in my mind I serue the Law of GOD: although in the flesh*, that is in

Col. 3. 2.

It is better with you then you thinke for, and therefore bee thankfull and cheere vp your heart in the Lord.

in that part, which is vnregenerate, I serue the Law of sinne.

Touching that other point, namely that you *fall often and againe into that sinne, which you haue vowed neuer to commit againe*: for as much as the same is against your will through great infirmitie, and not of any set purpose (although I wish you in any wise to bee as carefull as may bee therein, and to vse all good and holy meanes of watching ouer your affections, and auoyding all those occasions, whereby you may bee drawne forward into any the like sinne) by Prayer, fasting, and such like holy exercises; whereby

It is no wonder in this corruption to sin often in the same sin.

All good meanes must be vsed against euery sin.

you may be better ſtrengthened againſt all aſſaults of ſinne) yet would I not haue you to diſcourage your ſelfe too much with the conſideration thereof. For this you know, that one which walketh in a ſlipperie way or vpon Yce, may againſt his will, yea though hee looke neuer ſo well to his feete, not onely take the firſt, but the ſecond, and the third fall, yea many fals, notwithſtanding he thinketh to ſet his feet marueilous ſure.

Conſider wiſely and apply with reuerence.

Abraham although he was the Father of the faithfull, and for his godlineſſe highly commended in the Scripture; yet throw great weakneſſe, lyed firſt

Abraham fell more then once into one ſinne.

first in Egypt to *Pharaoh* in denying *Sarah* to be his Wife, *Genesis* the twelfth Chapter, and thirteenth Verse. Againe, he fell into the selfe-same sinne vnto *Abimelech*, the King of Gerar, *Genesis* the twentieth Chapter, and second Verse. *Sarah* also gaue her consent both times, and was partaker of the sinne. *Isaac* their sonne a verie vpright holy man, vpon the like occasion, so readily doyned & lye; as if his Father and Mother had not only by practice, but by precept taught him to lye. I know both what I say, and to whom I speak. For as these Examples and such like, may not, nor

These examples are to comfort such as would leaue sin, and not to encourage any to liue in sinne. *Gen.*26.7.

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ought not to make vs bold to runne head-long, or to continue with delight in any sinne great or small; (for then woe vnto vs) so they serue to comfort vs, that we stand not ouermuch amazed at our daily slips in sin. And that your troubled minde may be the more effectually supported against the poysonous temptation, beleeue as a most certaine truth, that that man who so dislikes and loathes his sinnes both before and after he hath committed them, shall neuer be condemned for them. The holy Apostle auoucheth confidently that there is a sinne which is not vnto death, which sin

1 Ioh. 5. 16.

if

if a man commit and his brother pray for him, it shall bee forgiuen him. Consider and ponder his words well, as he himselfe sets them downe in this manner: *If any man see his brother sinne a sinne that is not vnto death, let him aske, and he shall giue him life for them that sinne not vnto death. There is a sinne vnto death: I say not that thou shouldst pray for it. All vnrighteousnesse is sinne: there is a sinne not vnto death. We know that whosoeuer is borne of God sinneth not: but hee that is begotten of God keepeth himselfe, and that wicked one toucheth him not: We know that wee are of God, and* 1. Ioh. 5. 16, 17, 18, 19.

this whole World lyeth in wickednesse. But wee know, that the Sonne of God is come, and hath given vs a minde to know him which is true: and wee are in him that is true, that is in that his Sonne Iesus Christ: this same is that very God, and that eternall life.

From this place you may cleerly gather these comfortable conclusions. First, that there bee some sinnes which are not deadly or which shall bee able to condemne such as doe them: that is, such as are so grievous to them that have done them, that they doe not onely pray themselues most fervently for pardon, but others also are earnest

sutors vnto the Lord, that he will graciously forgiue them. Secondly, that there is a sin vnto death which cannot bee pardoned, because it cannot bee repented of; the sinne against the Holy Ghost; which is an vniuersall malicious wilfull falling away from the knowne Truth of the Gospell; which no elect Childe of God can fall into. Thirdly, that although all iniquitie and transgression be comprehended vnder the name of sinne, and therefore deadly in it self, because the wages of sin is death; yet may wee not therefore despaire, because euery sinne is not without hope of remedie. Fourthly,

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that no sinne is nor can be deadly to those that were made the sonnes & daughters of God in Christ, by whose Spirit being guided, they are so kept that they cannot be made Vassals and Slaues to sinne, neither can bee deadly wounded of Sathan their enemie. Fifthly, that all the Elect are by speciall priuiledge of Gods fauour assured that they are exempted from the condemnation of the vngodly multitude. Lastly, that euerie Childe of God must particularly apply to himselfe the generall promises made in Christ Iesus concerning euerlasting life, & feare not therefore, but be of good

Perk. Con.

courage: for whereas you haue an vnfained hatred of euill, and a great desire to doe the things that may please God, it is a sure argument you are a true member of Christ; according to that saying of PAVL: *They which are of the spirit, sauour the things which are of the spirit.* Rom.8.5.

And if Sathan obiect your sins to you, or charge you with them, answere him, that they are all discharged in Christ. And if, with his wily and violent temptations, he carrie you into any sinne, let him be sure he shall answere it, and not you: it shall bee set on his score at the Day of Iudge-

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Iudgement: because hee was the Author of it, and forced you against your will as hee did that holy man *Iob*, whom hee so furiously tormented, that in his fierie passions, hee most bitterly cursed the day and time that euer he was borne.

Iob 3.3.

Finally, if you fall by frailtie of the flesh, & that corruption which is glued so fast to this bodie of sin, that it will not be perfectly diuorced in this life; that shall perish therefore, but so, as still you shall haue Christ your assured Aduocate and All-sufficient Sauiour. Make your best aduantage of these things for your soules comfort: But

keepe

keepe your soule diligently, that you take not any incouragement hereby to harbour or nourish the least affection, thought, or motion to any sin though neuer so toothsome or pleasant: for then you vndoe your selfe for euer. Therefore stand vpon your gard with all diligence: & then though you endure many sharp brunts, and sore skirmishes yet shall the victorie bee most happie and glorious with euerlasting triumph.

The first Obiection cõcerning hardnesse of heart.

Now followeth a sixt obiection concerning hardnesse of heart. That you cannot profit by the Word preached, and therefore thinke it were as good or bet-

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better not to heare at all, as to heare to no purpose, and profit. For hardnesse of heart, which is the first branch of this Obiection, I answere that it is a principall part of the corruption of the old man, which cleaueth fast vnto our nature, and is one of our mortall enemies, which will haunt vs vnto the death. For our faith shall be exercised therewith as long as wee liue in this World. Therefore our best remedie is to arme our selues with the Armour of Proofe before rehearsed, and to buckle with this Aduersarie, whose edge & courage, by little and little shall be abated. And for

Hardnes of heart will hang vpon vs & haste vs to the death.

your

your encouragement thus I say, that flesh and blood hath not opened your eies to see this to be a sinne, neither touched your hart with a misliking thereof, for then you might long ago haue found out this & many other sinnes, when they haue reigned in you more strongly, and carryed you headlong, without any resistance or misliking, into so much euill, to commit sin with great greedinesse. But then you could finde no fault at all with your selfe, nay you thought your selfe in as good case as it was possible. And no marueil, because you were blinded through the darkenesse of your owne vnderstanding

and

Blesse Gods Name, that now you see & grieue for that sinne which in former times you neither saw nor grieued for.

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and reason, so as you could judge no colours. Thus it was with the holy Apostle before his Conversion and Regeneration, as hee testifieth of himselfe, when through the ignorance of the true understanding of the Law, hee thought hee was able to keep the Law. *I once* (saith hee, *was alive without the Law: but when the Commandement came, sinne revived, & but I dyed: and the same Commandement which was ordayned unto life, I found to bee unto death.* Yea, such was his blindnesse, when hee was a cruell Persecutor of Christ in his members, hee thought hee performed acceptable ser-

Your case all one with the Apostle Paul. Ro. 7. 9. &c.

uice

uice to God. This hee is not ashamed to confesse in most euident termes; I also so verily thought in my selfe that I ought to doo many contrarie things against the Name of IESVS of Nazaret. Which thing also I did in Ierusalem: for many of the Saints I shut vp in Prison, hauing receiued authoritie of the High Priests, and when they were put to death, I gaue my sentence, &c.

Acts 26. 9, 10. &c.

Now through Gods goodnesse, for the welfare of your soule, your eyes which were blind, are opened to see those things which you neuer saw before, and your heart is touched with a wonderfull

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full misliking of that which before you loued. Yea, indeed you must needs confesse you see & feele your hardnes of heart, but you cannot helpe not amend it. No, but the Lord both can and will helpe to amend whatsoeuer is amisse in his time. In the meane time, doe what you can. *Be patient, tarrie the Lords leisure, waie vpon him, and he shall comfort thine heart.*

Glue God leaue, and hee will helpe that which you cannot. *Psal.27.14.*

Where you say, you cannot profit by the Word of God preached, that is also a generall complaint of all such as are most carefull to profit. But your owne wordes doe proue against your selfe, that you doe profit. For if you profited

fited not, how comes it to passe that you haue found out this fault, that you cannot profit? It is not the manner of such as doe not receiue profit by the word preached, to find fault, but to please and flatter themselues most, when they profit least. Therefore this is a great Argument and sound proofe of your profiting, in that you can thus blame your selfe, that you doe not profit. And it pleaseth the Lord thus to exercise you and the rest of his beloued ones, with the feeling hereof, not to discourage you; but that this may be as a Whet-stone to sharpen your stomacke, to heare with greater conscience,

The complaint of not profiting is very profitable, because it makes you carefull to profit.

ence, and as a spurre to make you more eager vpon the Word when it is preached; that the ofter you heare, you may desire more and more, to profit by hearing.

As you loue your soule take heed of this temptation.

But whereas in the end, you throw downe this logge in your owne way, that it were good, not to heare at all; I am to giue you speciall warning as you tender the saluation of your own soule, to take heed how you giue consent to that temptation, in the least thought of your heart: for it is a strong inchantment of Sathan, to bewitch you withall, and a choise bait to catch your soule in euerlasting destruction.

ction. Hee knowes this as well as any man can tell him, that as the Word preached is the only most principall meanes which God hath ordayned, as to beget Faith, Repentance, and all other saving Graces needfull to Saluation, so also to arme and strengthen you against the whole battery and force of all his temptations. Hee knowes also that from thence you daily gather courage against him. Whether it be thus or not, I appeale to your conscience. And if you haue found this powerfull worke in your owne soule, then so often as hee shall thrust in this temptation, say vnto him, Auoyd Sa-

The Deuill himselfe hates preaching (more then holy water) because it ouerthroweth his kingdome. Rom. 10. 17.

Mat. 4. 10.

Sathan; for thou laboureſt to murther my precious Soule, by withdrawing me from the meanes of my Saluation: And remember *Peters* wordes where hee ſaith, *Maſter, to whom ſhall wee goe? Thou haſt the words of eternall life.* Adde hereto that which is written elſe-where: *All fleſh is graſſe, and all the glorie of man is as the flower of graſſe: the graſſe withereth and the flower falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever: and this is the Word which is preached among you.* Let no enchantment draw you from this, but holde it faſt to the death.

Iohn 6. 68.

1. Pet. 1. 24, 25.

But how doth hee vrge this

this point against you, and with what reason? First, because you doe not feele profit presently. Secondly, because you doe not profit so much as you should. Now marke, I beseech you, the Deuils craft in reasoning. First, you feele no profit by the Word presently so soone as you heare it preached, therefore you doe not profit at all. You feele no profit presently, therefore you shall neuer feele profit. You shal see this cunning layed open to your vnderstanding in a familiar example, after this manner. A sicke man hath Physick giuen him to helpe his sicknesse: thee is not helped pre-

The Deuils craft in reasoning.

The Deuils cunning layd wide open by sensible reasons.

presently so soone as hee hath taken it: Therefore he shall neuer haue helpe. The Husband-man doth sowe his seed and casts it into the ground, that it may growand bring forth fruit: but it growes not so soone as it is sowne: Therefore it will not grow at any time, neither shall hee euer reape any crop of his seed.

Againe, hee reasoneth thus against you, you profit not so much as you should, or not alwayes alike: Therefore you profit not at all. This is as if one should reason after this fashion. One Acre of Corne ground some yeere brings forth fiue, tenne, twen-

twenty, or a hundred-fold: But it doth not so euerie yeere: Therefore it brings forth nothing at all. Some yeeres an Occupyer gaines a hundred pound by his Trade: Hee gaines not so much euerie yeere: Therefore hee gaines nothing. Thus the Deuill reasoneth with you: therefore bee your selfe Iudge of his manner of reasoning; and the Lord in mercie giue you wisdome, in all things to take heed of his wilinesse, that you bee not by him any way abused.

The seuenth and last Obiection is, concerning euill thoughts, which arise in the minde, wherewith I know, some are not a little

The last Obiection concerning euill thoughts.

I trou-

troubled. For comfort of whose weake consciences, which are many times ouer much gricued, by the consideration therof; I answere thus, frō the Prophet *Ieremy*, the seuenteenth chapter and ninth Verse: that *the heart is deceitfull, and wicked aboue all things: who can know it?* By which place (if my iudgment doe not much abuse me) this one Lesson may be rightly and kindly gathered, that when the best men and women haue done their best, to their vtmost power, they shall neuer attaine or come to the perfect and full knowledge of all the corruption, and filthinesse which is there hatched, & har-

Ier. 17. 9.

The heart is like a bottomles pit, which can neuer be drawne dry.

harboured: becauſe it is likd to a bottomleſſe Pit, which can neuer be drawn dry. Hereupon I reaſon thus. If wee ſhall neuer in the whole courſe of our life, come to the thorow and full knowledge of all that venemous poyſon, which is deepe roored in the Dungeon of our vnderſtanding and will: how then ſhall it euer be poſſible for vs, to attaine to the perfect reformation of ſo many diſorders, as are there to be found? Againe, the Lord himſelfe ſaith, *That all the imaginations of the thoughts of mans heart, be euill, onely euill, and that continually.* If all bee euill by nature, before wee bee re- Gen. 6. 5.

regenerate, and borne a-new, by a second birth of the Spirit, and the Word, and that continually: then no maruell if some bee euill, and that continually, after our regeneration. Because we be renewed but in part, *and wee haue so put on the new man, which after God is created in true Holinesse and Rygheousnesse*, as that we shall neuer cleane, and altogether, *put off the old man with all his deceiueable lusts, vntill wee put off this flesh; and that, by death.*

Ephes. 4. 24.

In this one point standeth a great part of our Christian Warfare, wherein wee are at all times and seasons, to stand vpon our guard,

guard, and to watch with all diligence, in withstanding the euill affections & thoughts of our hearts, which as *Peter* saith, *fight against our soules*. For these bee such spitefull enemies, as lodge themselues close euen in the Closet of our heart, they eate and drinke with vs, they sleepe and wake with vs, they ride and goe with vs, they goe out and in with vs: to bee short, when our other enemies, the World, and the Deuill, doe grant vs some time of truce, these will afford vs no peace; because they lie so neere vs, as that euermore they are at hand ready to assault vs, both before and behinde, and on euery side. There-

This is our taske to our dying day, to fight against our affections which are our deadly foes. 1. *Pet.* 2. 11. Our vnruly & lordly lusts do awe vs cõtinually

Faith and Prayer, are our best Armour.

Therefore we are to the vttermoſt of our power, to arme our ſelues ſtrongly againſt them by Faith, by Prayer, and all other good and holy meanes: That we may daily get ground of them, and through Gods Grace, ouer-maſter them in ſome good meaſure, to our euerlaſting comfort: The rather becauſe the Wiſeman ſaith; *Pro.16.32.* *Hee that is ſlow to anger, is better then a mightie man, and he that ruleth his owne minde, is better then he that winneth a Citie.*

A wofull complaint againſt euill thoughts.

But euen now while wee are ſpeaking of euill thoughts, there comes one, with a moſt daunta-ble complaint, ſaying; O Sir,

Sir, I am so troubled this way, as I thinke there was neuer any Childe of God so grieuously tempted. For I haue such wicked and blasphemous thoughts, as make my flesh to tremble, and all my bones to shake, yea, they are such as they almost driue mee to despaire, when I thinke vpon them. For they strike not at men, but at God himselfe. They exault themselues against the Persons of the Trinitie, and some of them against the blessed, and holy Scriptures. What they be in particular, I am ashamed to spake. If you bee ashamed so much as to name them, then I perceiue you take

no great liking of them, neither doe you meane to entertayne them. And therfore I answere in few wordes, they shall not bee able to hurt you. *If I regard wickednesse in my hart* (sayth the Prophet) *God will not heare me.* He doth not say, if there bee any wickednesse at all in my heart, or any thought of wickednesse. (For who can say, *My heart is clean?* but *if I regard wickednesse*, that is, if I delight in it, or meane to nourish it within mee, then I am sure the Lord will not heare my Prayer, nor shew mee any favour. But as if the Prophet should say, and as I am sure you doe say, That

Psal.66.18.

It is one thing to haue euill thoughts: and another to like of them, and delight in them.

is

is farre from mee, to take delight in any ſuch vngodly, and blaſphemous thoughts; yea, I moſt heartily Prayſe God for his great Mercie, that is ſo farre from mee, that I am not more grieued for any thing, then for this, that any ſuch thought ſhould come into my minde. And therefore hee and you, and you as well as he, may bee vndoubtedly perſwaded, the Lord will neither reiect you, nor your Prayers, which in CHRIST his Name you ſhall offer vp vnto him.

And whereas you think it ſo ſtrange, to haue ſo euill thoughts to ariſe in your minde; and that you

are perſwaded there are no more ſo tempted beſide yourſelfe: I anſwere, vpon mine own knowledge, you are thereiu greatly deceiued.

There bee many who are euen as much troubled with the ſame, or with as euill. And this I dare auouch, that the moſt godly are not free, but are ſubiect vnto moſt vngodly thoughts, although they yeeld not vnto them.

The moſt godly are not free from euill thoughts. Ro. 3. 10. & Pſal. 51. 5.

Firſt, becauſe they as well as others, doe carrie with them a curſed corrupt nature, which is the roote from whence all euill ſpringeth.

Secondly, becauſe they haue ſuch an enemie, as

will

will not spare to tempt them to the greatest euill; yea, to this, then the which there can bee none greater, namely to curse God: as the iust and holy man *Iob* was tempted. But as that good man withstood the temptation, so doe they fight against euery euill motion, and are mercifully preserued.

Iob tempted to curse God not in his heart, but with his mouth. *Iob.* 17.

Yet there is one thing more concerning euill thoughts, which is, that you cannot bee ridde of them: but that euer and anon they come into your minde. To this I answere, that the sooner you checke them, and the more strongly you resist them; the sooner, a great deale, shall

1. *Pet.* 2. 11.

shall you bee ridde of them.

First, you must resist: for, *Resist the Devill, and he will flye from you.* And here marke, that this resistance must bee by the Word, and by Prayer.

Iames 4.7. The ready way to bee rid of euill thoughts, is to resist them.

Secondly, you must resist eagerly, and speedily. And therefore as *David* hasted to fight against *Goliah*, and with courage slang a stone so hard, that it stucke fast in the forehead of the vncircumcised Philistine: so must you speedily strike at euery such thought; so soone as you shall perceiue the same to put out his head, and once to arise in your minde. And as Iesus Christ be-

1. Sam. 17.48

being tempted of the Deuill to fall downe and worship him, at the same instant, gaue him his answer, saying, *Auoyd Sathan*: so must you giue them a present answere, and send them packing to the Deuill of Hell, from whence they came, and whither you are in all haste to returne them. If when you haue done what you can, you finde your selfe too weake for them, and that they bee too hard a great deale for you, then turne your Captaine Christ Iesus to them, who hath so fully conquered for you; as that howsoeuer they shall assault you continually, and many times foyle you, Mat. 4. 10.

you, yet shall they neuer get the full victorie ouer you; but you in your Captaine shall bee more then a Conquerour ouer them, and all the rest of your deadly Enemies: for CHRIST *was deliuered to death for our sinnes, and rose againe for our Iustification.* To him therefore be glory for euer. *Amen.*

Rom.8.37.

Rom.4.25.

Thus you haue the pledge of my good will towards you and many others: which I haue not done to exclude any grace or blessing of comfort, which you may receiue in greater measure, from your owne godly Pastor (most carefull of your estate) but that you may more

more highly account of ſo excellent Graces of God in him : And that whatſoeuer is wanting in this my poore Treatiſe, may by him and others be more fully ſupplyed.

FINIS.

more highly account of so excellent Graces of God in him: And that whatsoever is wanting in this my poore Treatise, may by him and others be more fully supplyed.

FINIS.

A DIRECTION, to the farther comforting of afflicted Consciences.

THe Spirit of God, by the mouth and Ministerie of the Apostle, saith, Whatsoeuer things are written afore-time, are written for our learning, that wee through patience & comfort of the Scriptures might haue hope, *Rom.* 15.4. Againe, The whole Scripture is giuen by inspiration of God, and is profita-

fitable to teach, to improue, to correct, and to instruct, that the man of God may be absolute being made perfect vnto all good workes. 2. *Tim.* 3. 16. *The due consideration of these places, doth teach vs, that the expresse wordes of holy Scripture, as they bee recorded in the Bookes of the Olde and New Testament, are the lively Fountayne from whence the faithfull Ministers of Iesus Christ, must draw all sound, profitable, and absolute instruction and consolation for themselues, and for Gods people, which depend vpon his Ordinance. Therefore I hold it verie needfull, continually to reade*

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the Scriptures with reuerence and Prayer: yea to learne by heart such places as make most for our particular instruction and consolation. For a fit place of Scripture, remembred or alleaged in the heate and height of any vehement temptation, is like cold water cast upon the flaming fire, to quell and quench the rage thereof; and an Aqua Composita, or some Quintessence to reuiue one that is fallen into a deadly sowne. For this cause I haue gathered together some of the most choise comfortable places of holy Scripture, which are heere and there scattered in the former Tretise, with some other of like na-

nature, that such as are distressed may more readily turne to them upon any occasion; and by often reading them, become so perfit, as to have them at their fingers end for their owne comfort, and the benefit of others, according to fit oportunitie. For conclusion of my weake endeavour, to ease the diseased Conscience, I have added a sweet gracious Prayer of the holy constant Martyr of Iesus Christ, Master Iohn Bradford, as I found it set downe in one of Master Perkins Workes.

AF-

AFFLICTIONS verie behoofefull and profitable vnto the Godly.

BEhold, blessed is the man whome God correcteth: therefore refuse not thou the chastening of the Almightie. Iob 5.17, 18, 19.

For hee maketh the wound, and bindeth it vp: hee smiteth, and his hands make whole.

He shall deliuer thee in sixe troubles: and in the seuenth, the euill shall not touch thee. Before

Psal.119. 67.71. Before I was afflicted, I went astray: but now I keepe thy Word.

It is good for mee that I haue beene afflicted, that I may learne thy Statutes.

Pro.3.11,12 My Son refuse not thou the chastning of the Lord, neither bee grieued with his correction.

For the Lord correcteth him whom he loueth, euen as a Father doth the Child in whom hee delighteth.

Ro.5.3,4,5. We reioyce in tribulations, knowing that tribulation bringeth forth patience.

And Patience Experience, & Expetience Hope: and Hope maketh not ashamed, because the loue of God is shed abroad in

our

our hearts, by the Holy Ghoſt, which is giuen vnto vs.

Who ſhall ſeparate vs from the loue of Chriſt? Shall tribulation, or anguiſh, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſſe, or perill, or Sword? Rom.8.35, 36,37,28, 39.

As it is written, for thy ſake are wee killed all the day long; wee are accounted as ſheep for the ſlaughter.

Neuertheleſſe, in all theſe things wee are more then Conquerors through him that loued vs.

For I am perſwaded that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come,

come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall bee able to separate vs from the loue of God, which is in Christ Iesus our Lord.

1.Cor.10.13 There hath no tentation taken you, but such as appertayneth to man: and God is faithfull which will not suffer you to be tempted aboue that you bee able, but will euen giue the issue with the temptation, that yee may bee able to beare it.

Heb.2.10, 17,18. It became him, for whom are all things, and by whome are all things, seeing that hee brought many Children vnto glorie, that hee should consecrate the Prince of their Sal-

Saluation through afflictions.

Wherefore in all things it became him to be made like vnto his Brethren, that hee might be mercifull, & a faithfull High Priest in things concerning GOD, that hee might make reconciliation for the sinnes of the people.

For in that hee suffered, and was tempted, hee is able to succour them that are tempted.

For wee haue not an High Priest, which cannot bee touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but in all things was tempted like vnto vs. Heb. 4. 15, 16.

Let vs therefore goe boldly vnto the Throne of

Grace, that wee may receiue Mercie, and finde Grace to helpe in time of need.

2.Tim.2. 11,12. It is a true saying; If we be dead with him, we also shall liue with him.

If wee suffer, wee shall also raigne with him.

1.Pet 1.3, 4,5,6,7. Blessed bee God, euen the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ, which according to his abundant Mercie hath begotten vs againe vnto a liuely hope, by the Resurrection of Iesus Christ from the dead,

To an Inheritance immortall and vndefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserued in Heauen for you,

Which are kept by the power of GOD through

Faith

Faith vnto Saluatiō, which is prepared to bee ſhewed in the laſt time:

Wherein yee reioyce, though now for a ſeaſon (if need require) yee are in heauineſſe, through manifold tentations.

That the tryall of your Faith being much more precious then Gold that periſheth (though it bee tryed with fire) might bee found vnto your prayſe, & honour and glorie, at the appearing of Ieſus Chriſt.

My Brethren, count it exceeding ioy when you fall into diuers tentations: *Iames* 1.2, 3,12.

Knowing that the trying of your Faith bringeth forth patience.

Bleſſed is the man that

endureth tentation: for when he is tryed, hee ſhall receiue the crowne of life, which the Lord hath promiſed to them that loue him.

2. Pet. 2. 9. The Lord knoweth how to deliuer the godly out of tentation, and to reſerue the vniuſt vnto the Day of Iudgement to bee puniſhed.

Zach. 13. 9. I will bring the third part through the fire, and will fine them as the ſiluer is fined, and will try them as gold is tryed: they ſhall call on my Name, and I wil heare them: I will ſay it is my people, and they ſhall ſay, the Lord is my God.

Exod. 3. 2. Then the Angell of the Lord appeared vnto *Moſes*,

ſes, in a flame of fire out of the midſt of a Buſh: and he looked and behold the Buſh burned with fire, and the Buſh was not conſumed.

Affliction is the ſhare and portion of the Lords elect.

IEſus ſaid vnto his Diſciples, If any man will follow me, let him forſake himſelfe, and take vp his croſſe and follow me. *Mat.16.24*

We muſt through many afflictions enter into the Kingdome of Heauen. *Acts 14.22*

I account that the afflictions of this preſent time, are not worthy of the glorie, which ſhall be ſhewed vnto vs.

Heb. 12.8, 9,10,11.

If ye be without correction, whereof all are partakers, then are yee Baſtards, and not Sonnes.

Moreouer, we haue had the Fathers of our bodies, which corrected vs, and we gaue them reuerence: ſhould wee not much rather be in ſubiection vnto the Father of Spirits, that we may liue?

For they verily for a few dayes chaſtened vs after their owne pleaſure, but he chaſteneth vs for our profit, that we might be partakers of his Holineſſe.

Now, no chaſtizing for the preſent ſeemeth to bee ioyous, but grieuous: but afterward it bringeth the quiet fruit of Righteouſneſſe,

neſſe, vnto them which are thereby exerciſed.

As many as I loue, I rebuke and chaſten. *Reuel.3.19.*

The Lord will protect and ſupport his Children in all Diſtreſſes.

BVt thou Lord, art a Buckler for mee: my glorie, and the lifter vp of my head. *Pſal.3.3,4, 5,6,7,8.*

I layd mee downe and ſlept, and roſe vp againe: for the Lord ſuſtained me.

I will not bee afraid for ten thouſand of the people, that ſhould be ſet mee round about.

O Lord, ariſe, helpe me, my God; for thou ſmiteſt all mine enemies vpon the

cheeke-bone : thou haſt broken the teeth of the wicked.

Saluation belongeth vnto the Lord : and thy bleſſing is vpon thy people.

Pſal. 4. 8. I will lay me downe, & alſo ſleepe in peace : for thou Lord onely makeſt me dwel in ſafetie.

Pſal 22. 9, 10. Thou didſt draw mee out of the wombe : thou gaueſt me hope euen at my Mothers breſts.

I was caſt vpon thee, euen from the wombe : thou art my God from my Mothers belly.

Pſal. 34. 17, 18, 19, 20, 22. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth them : & deliuereth them out of all their troubles.

The Lord is neere to them

them that are of a contrite heart, and will saue such as be afflicted in spirit.

Great are the troubles of the righteous: but the Lord deliuereth him out of them all.

Hee keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

The Lord redeemeth the soules of his Seruants: and none that trust in him shall perish.

I haue beene young, and am old: yet I neuer saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. *Psal 37.25. 37.39.40.*

Marke the vpright man, and behold the iust: for the end of that man is peace,

The Saluation of the

righteous men ſhall bee of the Lord : Hee ſhall bee their ſtrength in time of trouble.

For the Lord ſhall helpe them, and deliuer them from the wicked, and ſaue them becauſe they truſt in him.

Pſal.55.22. Caſt thy burden vpon the Lord, and hee ſhall nouriſh thee: he ſhall not ſuffer the righteous to fall for euer.

Pſal.91.1, 11,12,13. Who ſo dwelleth in the ſecret of the moſt High, ſhal abide in the ſhaddow of the Almightie.

For hee ſhall giue his Angels charge ouer thee to keepe thee in al thy waies.

They ſhall beare thee in their hands, that thou hurt

hurt not thy foot againſt a ſtone.

Thou ſhalt walke vpon the Lyon and Aſpe: the young Lyon, and Dragon ſhalt thou treade vnder feet.

I will lift mine eyes vnto the Mountaines, from whence mine helpe ſhall come. *Pſal.* 121. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

My helpe commeth from the Lord, which hath made the Heauen and the Earth.

Hee will not ſuffer thy foote to ſlip: for hee that keepeth thee will not ſlumber.

Behold, hee that keepeth Iſrael will neither ſlumber nor ſleepe.

The Lord is thy keeper:

per: the Lord is thy ſhaddow at thy right hand.

The Sunne ſhall not ſmite thee by day, nor the Moone by Night.

The Lord ſhall preſerue thee from all euill: hee ſhall keepe thy ſoule.

The Lord ſhall preſerue thy going out, and thy comming in, from henceforth and for euer.

Eſay 43.1. But now thus ſaith the Lord, that created thee, O *Iacob*, and hee that formed thee O Iſrael, feare not: for I haue redeemed thee: I haue called thee by thy Name, thou art mine.

2 Cor.4.8, 9,10,11, 16,17,18. We are afflicted on euerie ſide, yet are we not indiſtreſſe: in pouertie, but not

not ouercome of pouertie.

We are perſecuted, but not forſaken : caſt downe but periſh not.

Euery where we beare about in our body the dying of the Lord Ieſus, that the life of Ieſus might alſo be manifeſt in our bodies.

For wee which liue, are alwayes deliuered vnto death for Ieſus ſake, that the life of Ieſus might bee made manifeſt in our mortall fleſh.

Therefore we faint not: but though our outward man periſh, yet the inward is renewed daily.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment cauſeth vnto vs a far moſt excellent & eternal waight of glorie. *God*

God will regard the Prayers of his Seruants, and returne a gracious answere.

Psal.10.17. LOrd, thou hast heard the desire of the poore: thou prepares their heart: thou bendest thine eare to them.

Psal.50.15. Call vpon me in the day of trouble: so will I deliuer thee, and thou shalt glorifie me.

Psal.65.2. Because thou hearest the Prayer, vnto thee shall all flesh come.

Psal.91.15, 16. Hee shall call vpon mee, and I will heare him: I will bee with him in trouble: I will deliuer him and glorifie him.

With long life will I satisfie

tisfie him, and ſhew him my Saluation.

The Lord is neere to all that call vpon him: yea to all that call vpon him in truth. *Pſal.* 145. 18,19.

He will fulfill the deſire of them that feare him: he will alſo heare their cry, & will ſaue them,

Yea, before they call I will anſwere, and whiles they ſpeake I will heare. *Eſay* 65.24.

Aske, and it ſhall bee giuen you: ſeeke and you ſhall finde: knocke, and it ſhall be opened vnto you. *Mat.* 7.7,8, 9,10,11.

For whoſoeuer asketh, receiueth: and he that ſeeketh findeth: and to him that knocketh, it ſhall bee opened.

For what man is there a-

among you, which if his Sonne aske him Bread, would giue him a ſtone?

Or if hee aske a Fiſh, will hee giue him a Serpent?

If yee then which are euill, can giue to your children good gifts, how much more ſhall your Father, which is in Heauen, giue good things to them that aske him?

Mat.21.22. Whatſoeuer yee ſhall aske in Prayer, if yee beleeue yee ſhall receiue it.

Rom.10.13. Whoſoeuer ſhall call vpon the Name of the Lord ſhall be ſaued.

1.Iohn 5. 14,15. This is the aſſurance that we haue in him, that if wee aske any thing according to his will, he heareth vs. And

And if wee know that he heareth vs, whatsoeuer wee aske, wee know that wee haue the Petitions that wee haue desired of him.

Likewise, the Spirit helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what to pray as we ought: but the Spirit it selfe maketh request for vs with sighes which cannot be expressed. *Rom.* 8.26, 27, 28.

But hee that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the meaning of the Spirit: for hee maketh request for the Saints according to the will of God.

Also we know, that all things worke together for the best vnto them that loue God, euen to them whom

whom hee hath called of purpoſe.

God will perfect the worke of his owne grace in all his Children.

Eſay 41.9, 10, 13, 14. THou art my Seruant: I haue choſen thee, and not caſt thee away.

Feare thee not, for I am with thee: be not afraid, for I am thy God: I will ſtrengthen thee, and helpe thee, and ſuſtayne thee with the right hand of my Iuſtice.

For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, ſaying vnto thee, Feare not, I will helpe thee.

Feare not, thou Worme *Iacob*,

Iacob, and yee men of Israel: I will helpe thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer, the holy one of Israel.

Reioyce O Heauens: and be ioyfull O Earth: burst forth into prayse, O yee Mountaynes: for God hath comforted his people, and will haue mercie on his afflicted. *Esay* 49.13, 14, 15, 16.

But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten mee.

Can a woman forget her Childe, and not haue compassion on the Sonne of her wombe? though they should forget, yet will not I forsake thee.

Behold, I haue grauen thee vpon the palme of mine hands: thy wals are euer in my sight. For

Esay 54.7, 8, 9, 10.

For a little while I haue forsaken thee: but with great compassion will I gather thee.

For a moment in mine anger I hid my face from thee for a little season: but with euerlasting Mercie haue I had compassion on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

For this is vnto me as the waters of *Noah*: for as I haue sworne that the waters of *Noah* should no more goe ouer the Earth: so haue I sworne, that I would not bee angry with thee nor rebuke thee.

For the Mountaines shall remooue, and the Hils shal fall downe: but my Mercie shall not depart from thee,

thee, neither ſhall the couenant of my peace fall away, ſaith the Lord, that hath compaſſion on thee.

Foraſmuch as hee loued his owne which were in the World, vnto the end he loued them. *Iohn* 13.1.

For the gifts and calling of God, are without Repentance. *Rom.* 11.29.

God is faithful, by whom yee are called vnto the fellowſhip of his Sonne Ieſus Chriſt our Lord. 1.*Cor.* 1.9.

Faithfull is hee which hath called you, which will alſo doe it. 1.*Theſ.* 5.24

Euery good giuing, and euery perfect gift is from aboue, and commeth downe from the Father of Lights, with whom is no *Iames* 1.17.

varia-

variablenes, neither shaddowing by turning.

Euery repentant Sinner shall be pardoned.

Psal.32. 1,2,5. BLessed is hee whose wickednesse is forgiuen, and whose sinne is couered.

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquitie, and in whose Spirit there is no guile.

I acknowledged my sinne vnto thee, neither hid I mine iniquitie: for I thought, I will confesse against my selfe my wickednesse vnto the Lord, and thou forgauest the punishment of my sinne.

Psal.103.2, 3,8,9,10, 11,12,13, 14. My soule prayse thou the Lord, and forget not all his Benefits. Which

Which forgiueth al thine iniquitie, and healeth all thine infirmities.

The Lord is full of compassion and Mercie, slow to anger, and of great kindnesse.

He will not alway chide, neither keepeth his anger for euer.

Hee hath not dealt with vs after our sinnes, nor rewarded vs after our iniquities.

For as high as the Heauen is aboue the Earth: so great is his mercy toward them that feare him.

As farre as the East is from the West; so far hath hee remooued our sinnes from vs.

As a Father hath compassion

passion on his Children: so hath the Lord compassion on them that feare him.

For he knoweth whereof wee be made, hee remembreth wee are but dust.

Pro. 28. 13. He that hideth his sinnes shall not prosper: but hee that confesseth and forsaketh them shall haue mercie.

Esay 1. 1. 16, 17, 18. Wash you, make you cleane: take away the euil of your workes from before mine eyes: cease to do euill, learne to doe well.

Come now and let vs reason together, sayth the Lord; though your sinnes were as Crimson, they shall bee made white as Snow, though they were red like Scarlet, they shall bee

bee white as Wooll.

Comfort yee, comfort yee my people, will your God say: speake comfortably to Ierusalem, and cry vnto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquitie is pardoned, for shee hath receiued of the Lords hand double for all her sinnes. *Esay* 40.1,2

Let the wicked forsake his wayes, and the vnrighteous his owne imaginations, and turne vnto the Lord, and hee will haue mercie vpon him, and to our God, for hee is readie to forgiue. *Esay* 55.7.

To him will I looke, euen to him that is poore and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my words. *Esay* 66.2.

Ier.3.12. O yee disobedient children returne, and I will heale your rebellions: behold wee come vnto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.

And the Lord said vnto me, Goe thorow the mids of the Citie, euen through the midst of Ierusalem, and set a marke vpon the foreheads of them that mourn and cry, for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof, *Ezekiel 9. Verse 4.*

Ezek.18. 21,22. If the wicked will returne from all his sins that hee hath committed, and keepe all my Statutes and doe that which is lawfull and right, hee shall surely liue, and shall not dye.

All

All his transgressions that hee hath committed, they shall not bee mentioned vnto him: but in his Righteousnesse that hee hath done, he shall liue.

Cast away all your transgressions whereby ye haue transgressed; and make you a new heart, and a new spirit: for why will yee dye, O house of Israel? 31.

For I desire not the death of him that dyeth, saith the LORD GOD: cause therefore one another to returne, and liue ye. 32.

O Israel returne vnto the Lord thy God: for thou hast fallen by thine iniquitie. Hos. 14. 2, 3.

Take vnto you wordes, and turne to the LORD,

and say vnto him, Take away all iniquitie, and receiue vs graciously: so will we render the calues of our lips.

Mat. 11. 28 Come vnto me all ye that are weary, and laden: and I will ease you.

1. Tim. 1. 15, 16. This is a true saying, and by all meanes worthy to bee receiued, that Iesus Christ came into the world to saue Sinners, of whom I am the chiefe.

Notwithstanding, for this cause I was receiued to Mercy, that Iesus Christ should first shew on me all long-suffering, vnto the ensample of them, which shall in time to come beleeue in him vnto eternall life.

If

If wee acknowledge our sinnes, God is faithfull and iust to forgiue vs our sins, and to clense vs from all vnrighteousnesse. 1. Iohn 1.9.

If any man sinne, wee haue an Aduocate with the Father, Iesus Christ the Iust. Iohn 2. 1,2.

And hee is the reconciliation for our sinnes: and not for ours onely, but also for the sins of the whole World.

Gods Ministers Physicians for troubled soules.

IN Dreames and Visions of the night when sleepe falleth vpon men, and they sleepe vpon their beds. Iob 33. 15.

16. Then hee openeth the eares of men, euen by their corrections which he had ſealed,

17. That he might cauſe man to turne away from his enterprize, &c.

19. Hee is alſo ſtricken with ſorrow vpon his bed, and the griefe of his bones is ſore, &c.

22. So, his ſoule draweth to the Graue, and his life to the buryers.

23. If there bee a Meſſenger with him, or an Interpreter one of a thouſand, to declare vnto man his righteouſneſſe,

24. Then will he haue mercie vpon him, and will ſay, Deliuer him, that hee goe not downe into the pit: for

I haue receiued a reconciliation.

Then ſhall his fleſh be as freſh as a Childes, and ſhal returne as in the dayes of his youth. 25.

He ſhall pray vnto God, and hee will bee fauourable vnto him, and hee ſhall ſee his face with ioy: for hee will render vnto man his Righteouſneſſe. 26.

Hee looketh vpon men, and if one ſay, I haue ſinned, and peruerted Righteouſneſſe, and it did not profit me? 27.

He will deliuer his ſoule from going into the pit, & his life ſhall ſee the light. 28.

Loe, all theſe things will God work twice or thrice with a man; 29.

30. That he may turne back his ſoule from the pit, to bee illuminate in the light of the liuing.

Eſay 50.4. The Lord God hath giuen mee a tongue of the learned, that I ſhould know to miniſter a word in time to him that is wearie.

Luke 22.32. When thou art conuerted, ſtrengthen thy Brethren.

2.Cor.1.3.4 Bleſſed be God, euen the Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, euen the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, which comforteth vs in all our tribulations, that wee may bee able to comfort them which are in any affliction, by the comfort wherwith

with wee our ſelues are comforted of God. 2.Cor.5. 19,20.

God was in Chriſt, and reconciled the World to himſelfe, not imputing their ſinnes vnto them, and hath committed to vs the Word of Reconciliation.

Now then wee are Ambaſſadours for Chriſt: as though God did beſeech you through vs, wee pray you in Chriſts ſtead, that yee bee reconciled to God.

A comfortable Prayer for the afflicted.

O Lord God & deare Father what ſhall I ſay, that feele al things to bee in manner with mee as in the wicked? Blinde is my minde, crooked is my will, and peruerſe concupiſcence is in mee as a ſpring of ſin-

ſtinking puddle. O how faint is my faith in me? how little is my loue to thee, and thy people? how great is my ſelfe-loue? how hard is my hart? By reaſon wherof I am moued to doubt of thy goodnes toward mee, whether thou art my mercifull Father, and whether I bee thy Childe or no. Indeed, worthily might I doubt, if that the hauing of theſe were the cauſe, and not the fruit rather

rather of thy Children. The cause why thou art my Father, is thy mercifull Goodnesse, Grace, and Truth in Christ Iesus, which cannot but remaine for euer. In respect whereof thou hast borne mee this good will to bring mee into thy Church by Baptisme, and to accept mee into the number of thy Children, that I might bee holy, faithfull, obedient, and innocent: and to call

me

me diuers times by the Miniſtery of thy Word into thy Kingdome, beſides the innumerable other benefits alwayes hitherto powred vpon me. All which thou haſt done of this thy good will, which thou of thine own mercy bareſt to mee in Chriſt before the World was made. The which thing as thou requireſt ſtraightly that I ſhould beleeue without doubting: ſo wouldeſt thou that in

all

all my needes I ſhould come vnto thee as to a Father, and make my mone without miſtruſt of being heard in thy good time, as moſt ſhall make for my comfort. Loe therefore, to thee deare Father I come through thy Sonne our Lord our Mediator & Aduocate Ieſus Chriſt, who ſitteth at thy right hand making interceſſion for mee. I pray thee of thy great goodneſſe and mercie

in

in Christ to bee merci-
full to me a sinner, that
I may indeed feele thy
sweete mercie as thy
Child. The time (Oh
deare Father) I ap-
point not: but I pray
thee, that I may with
hope still expect and
looke for thy helpe. I
hope that as for a little
while thou hast left
me; so thou wilt come
and visit me, and that
in thy great mercie,
whereof I haue great
need by reason of my
great

great miſerie. Thou art wont for a little ſeaſon in thine anger, to hide thy face from them whome thou loueſt: But ſurely (O Redeemer) in eternall mercies thou wilt ſhew thy compaſsions. For when thou leaueſt vs, O Lord, thou doeſt not leaue vs very long, neither doeſt thou leaue vs to our loſſe, but to our lucre and aduantage: euen that thy holy Spirit with bigger

portion

portion of thy power and vertue may lighten and cheere vs, that the want of feeling of our ſorrow may be recompenced plentifully with the liuely ſent of hauing thee to our eeternall ioy: and therefore thou ſwareſt that in thine euerlaſting mercie thou wilt haue compaſſion on vs. Of which thing to the end we might be moſt aſſured, thine Oath is to be marked: for thou ſaiſt:

As

As I haue ſworne, that I will neuer bring any more the waters to drowne the World: So haue I ſworne, that I will neuer more be angry with thee, nor reproue thee. The Mountaines ſhall remoue, & the Hilles ſhall fall downe: but thy louing kindnes ſhall not moue, and the Bond of thy peace ſhall not faile thee. Thus ſayeſt thou, the Lord our merciſull Redeemer: deare Father,

ther, therefore I pray thee remember euen for thine owne truth and mercies ſake, thy Promiſe and euerla-ſting Couenant: which in thy good time I pray thee write in my hart, that I may know thee to be the only God and Ieſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent; that I may loue thee with all my heart for euer; that I may loue thy people for thy ſake, that I may be holy in thy ſight therow

Chriſt

Christ: that I may alwayes not onely striue against sinne, but also ouercome the same daily more & more as thy Children doe; aboue all things desiring the Sanctification of thy Name, the comming of thy Kingdome, the doing of thy wil on earth as it is in Heauen, &c. through Iesus Christ our Redeemer, Mediator and Aduocate, Amen.

FINIS.